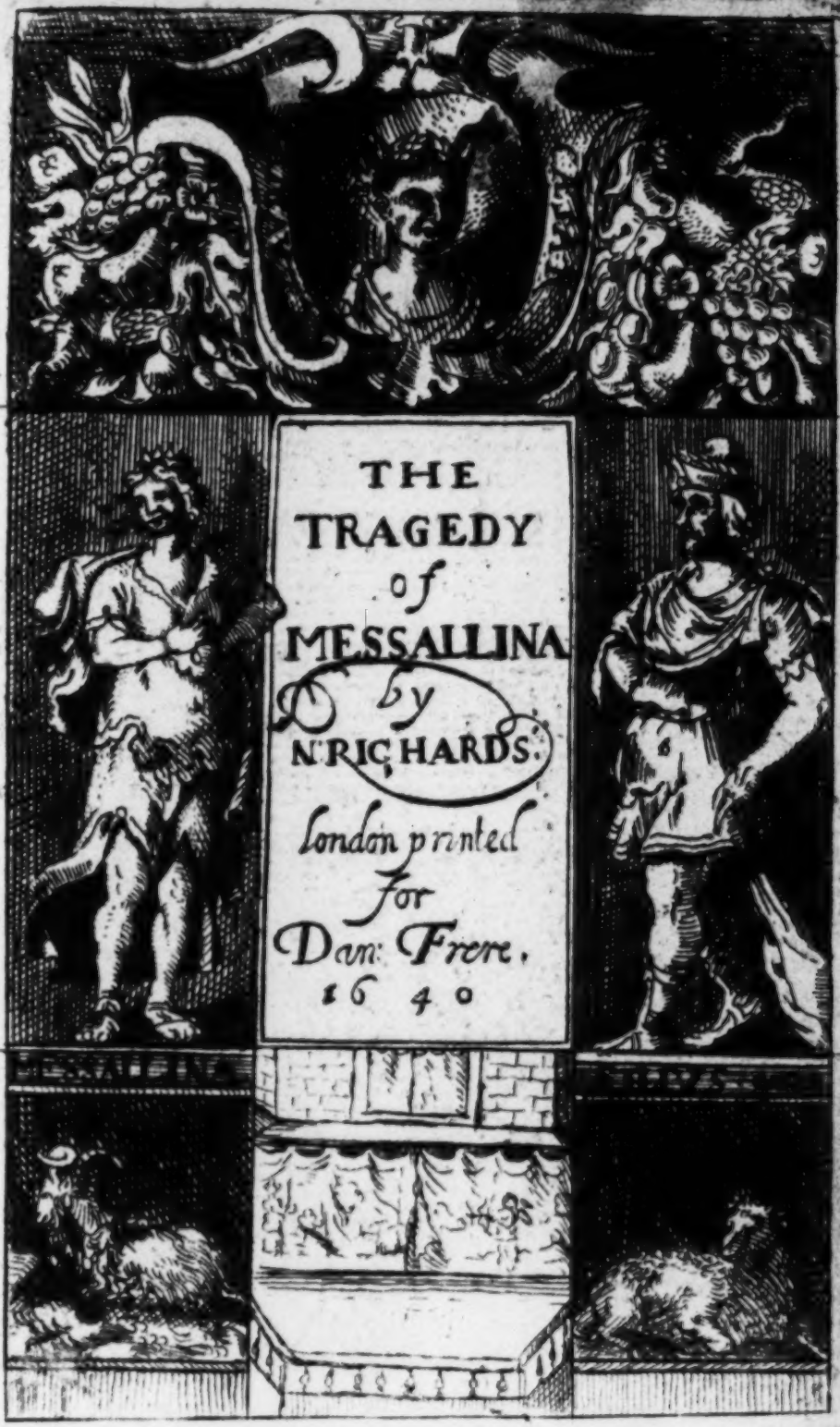

THE
TRAGEDY
of
MESSALLINA
by
N: RICHARDS.
London printed
for
Dan: Frere.
1640

THE TRAGEDY OF MESSALLINA The Roman Empereſſe.

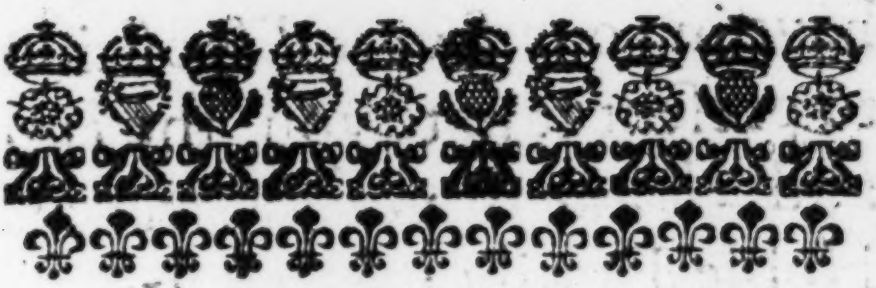
As it hath beene Acted With generall applauſe divers times, by the Company of his Majeſties Revells.

Written by

NATHANAEL RICHARDS.

Optimus hic & formoſiſſimus idem
Gentis patritiæ rapitur miſer extinguendus.
Meſſallinæ oculis. Iuvenal, Satyr. 10.

London Printed by *Tho. Cotes* for *Daniel Frere*, at the ſigne of the Red Bull in *Little Brittaine*. 1640.



TO THE RIGHT HONOVRABLE AND TRVLY NOBLE MINDED, *JOHN CARY*, VISCOVNT *ROCHFORD*.

My Lord,

YOur right Noble willing minde (though ſerious occaſions could not permit you) to ſee this *Tragedy Acted*, emboldens me (through the confidence I

have in your sweet disposition) to present it unto you, the *Heire* and *Honour* of your *Great* and Noble Family: *Emperatricis libido, periculosissima est*, witnesse *Valeria Messallina*, her Lust and Rule over doating *Majestie*. This testified by *Romes* Historians, (*Tacitus*, *Suetonus*, *Pliny*, *Plutarch* and *Juvenall*) the world(unlesse among the crooked conditions of the *Envious*) may (being honestly opinionated) perceive, that the sole Ayme of my discovery herein, no otherwise tends then to seperate *Soules* from the discovered *Evill*, the suppression of *Vice*, and exaltation of *Vertue*, flight from sinne for feare

of

of Iudgement; which seriously considered in a *Noble nature*. The *glorious Strumpet*, sparkling in beautie and destruction can never have power to tempt: This *Play* upon the *Stage*, passed the generall applause as well of Honorable Personages as others: And my hope is, the perusall will prove no lesse pleasing to your *Honour*. Two passages are past, the *Stage* and the *Presse*; nothing is absent now but the gentle approbation of your Lordships clemency to confirme the indeavour of him that truly is

Your Lordships true
Honourer,

Nathanael Richards.

To his worthy Friend, Mr. *Nathanael Richards*, upon his well-written Tragedy of *Messallina*.

WHen I beheld this *Roman Tragedie*,
Where the mad sinne of Lust in *Majestie*
And pow'r I saw attir'd, triumphantly,
Guiding the *Helme* of doating soveraignty
To her owne *Compasse*; I was pleas'd with it,
Cause things immodest, modestly were write.
Not in *Prodigious Language* that would start
Into the *Cheekes* the *suff'rings* of the heart,
And fright a *Blush* into a Feavour: tho
Of late (shame to this Age) some have writ so.
Had yours beene such, never should Pen of mine
(Poore though my *Muse*) have lent you halfe a line.
But now agen, recalling what you writ,
How well adorn'd with words, and wrought with wit;
I'le justifie the *Language* and the *Plot*
Can neither cast aspersion, nor spot
On your cleane *Fancie*; But *Apollo's* Bayse
Growes green upon your *Brow* to crowne your praise.
Then for this *Tragedy*, securely rest,
'Tis current *Coyne*, and will endure the Test.

Stephen Bradwell.

To my true Friend Mr. *Nathanael Richards* in due praise of his Tragedy of *Messallina*.

FRiend, y'ave so well limn'd *Messallina's* lust
T'were pity that the *Peece* should kisse the dust
Of darke *Oblivion*; you have (I confesse)
Apply'd a due *Preservative* the *Presse*.
Y'are now sayl'd forth o'th *Narrow Sea*, the Stage,
Into the world's wide *Ocean*, where the rage
Of Criticisme, it's utmost will extend
To buffet your new *Barke*: But feare not Friend,
She's so well built, so ballac't, so well man'd
With *Plot*, with *Forme* and *Language* that shee'l stand
The *storme*; and having plough'd the Seas passion,
Will Anchor safe i'th Rhode of approbation:
Where judgements equall hand shall moare her fast,
And hang a Lawrell-Garland on her Maste.

Robert Davenport.

Carissimo amico Auctori in eximiam Messallinæ *Tragediam.*

Ridentem venerem veteres pinxere, sed ecce
Apparet Venus hic sanguimolenta, nigra.
Lascivos amplexa viros amplectitur ensem:
Effera quæ vita, est hæc furibunda nece.
Sic eadem victrix, eademque libidinis ultrix,
Messallina, *altrix quæ fuit, ipsa fuit,*
Dum moritur mala pars, oritur pars, conjugis illa,
Quæ superat quamvis mors in utramque furit,
Casta parens toties, quoties fit adultera proles,
Pugnat & adversa cum pietate scelus:
Dumque scelus fugiens dat terga, stat altera lugens,
Et nituit niveo pectore purus honor.
Hæc ubi sunt verbis aptata, tragedia digna
Illa est inprimis laudis & illa tua est.

Thoma Combes.

To his Friend Mr. *Nathanael Richards*, upon his Tragedy of *Messallina*.

IF it be good to write the *truth* of ill
And *Vertues* excellence, 'tis in thy skill
(Respected Friend) thy nimble *Scenes* discover
Romes lust-burnt Emp're sse and her vertuous *Mother*
So truly to the life; judgement may see,
(Praysing this *Peece*) I doe not flatter thee.
Men here may reade Heaven's Art to chastise Lust;
Rich *Vertue* in a *Play*, so cleare; no rust,
Bred by the *squint* ey'd *critickes* conquering breath
Can e're deface it; *Messallina's* death
Adds life unto the *Stage*; where though she die
Defam'd; true *Justice* crownes this Tragedy.

Jo. Robinson.

To my Friend the Author Mr. *Nathanael Richards* on his Tragedy of *Messalina*.

For this thy Play (deare Friend) I must confesse
Thy Plot: contriv'd with such misteriousnesse
As if Fate turn'd the Scene; thy Language can
Expresse thee a Divine and Morrall Man,
The Musicke of thy Numbers might entice
Time's glorious Harlot from her lust-stung vice.
This is to shew my judgement, who will say
(That findes my approbation of this Play)
I want needefull knowledge? It shall be
Sufficient praise for me, I can praise thee.
'Tis judgement to know judgement, and I find
Most of our Playhouse wits, are of my minde.
Men call them Censurers a stocke of brothers,
Thought wise by praysing and dispraysing others:
Bid them write Playes themselves, & then you'l foyle 'em;
The'yl say they can't finde time: yes time to spoyle 'em.
Thou art above their aymes, who dislikes this
Must be a Goose, or Serpent: let him hisse.

Tho. Iordan

To his worthy Friend Mr. *Nathanael Richards*, upon his Tragedy of *Messallina*.

BEhold a *Poet* whose laborious Quill
Dictates his Makers prayse, above the skill
Of times *Earth-minding* Idolls muddy straine
(Base as the things they immitate) thy veine
(Approved friend) strikes dead the impious *Times*
Adored *Vices* and high raised *Crimes*
Which pulls *swift vengeance* downe; thy labour'd lines
Curbs *Vice*, crownes *Vertue*, gold from drosse refines
All gazing eyes may see thy Anchorite Muse
Delights in a conversion, not abuse
Romes mightie Whore by thee adornes the Stage:
For to convert not to corrupt this *Age*.
And they that (*Messallina*) thus pend sees
Must praise the Authors candor, thriftie Bees
Suck Hany out of weeds, her actions may
Have miracles for issue, if y'obay
Your jogging consciences that whispering say,
Be rul'd by this, instructing (Tragicke) Play.
Applaud that happy wit whose veines can stirre
Religious thoughts, *though in a* Theator.

Tho. Rawlins.

The Actors Names.

Claudius Emperour — *Will. Cartwright* Sen.
Silius chiefe Favorite to the Empresse. } *Christopher Goad.*
Saufellus chiefe of Counsell to *Silius* and *Messallina* } *Iohn Robinson.*
Valens } Of the same faction and favorites.
Proculus }
Menester an actor and Favorite compel'd by the Empresse. } *Sam. Tomson.*
Montanus a Knight in *Rome* defence vertuously inclined. } *Rich. Iohnson.*
Mela Seneca's Brother — *Will. Hall.*
Virgilianus and } Senators of *Messallinas* Faction.
Calphurnianus }
Sulpitius of the same Faction.
Narcissus } Minnions to the Emperour of his faction
Pallas }
Galistus }
Evodius a Souldier.

Messallina Empresse — *Iohn Barret.*
Lepida mother to *Messallina* — *Tho. Iessan.*
Sylana wife to *Silius* — *Mathias Morris.*
Vibidia matron of the Vestalls.
Calphurnia a Curtizan.
Hem and *Stitch*, two Panders.
Three murdered *Roman* Dames.
Manutius and *Folio*, Servants to *Lepida*.
Three Spirits.
Two severall Antimasques of Spirits and Bachinalls.

The Prologue.

TO write a Tragedy is no such ease
As some may thinke, 'mongst whom ther's a disease
Still of dislike, censuring what ere is writ
With ignorance; onely to be thought a wit.
Playes are like severall meates, their strange effects
So different prove, some carelesly neglect
What others long for, that which surfets thee,
Another sayes tis good, gives life to me.
What's to be done? the way to please you all
Requires an Art, past Magick naturall.
Our best endeavours still with Comick fare
Have striv'd to please; now all our cost and care,
Soares on the wings of labour'd industrie;
To feast your sences with the Tragedy
Of Roman Messallina, the Play is new,
And by Romes fam'd Historians confirm'd true.
We hope you'l not distaste it, nor us blame,
Where spots of life are acted to sinnes shame.
Tell me I pray? can there be no content?
To see high towring sinnes just punishment
And Vertues prayse; insatiate lust to die,
And chast Dames star'd unto Eternitie,
Will not this please? if any answer no,
I, let that soule and all the world to know,
Your loves the marke we ayme at, all our might,
Shootes at your love, labours to hit that white.

THE TRAGEDY OF Messallina, The Roman Empresse.

ACT. 1. SCENE. 1.

Enter Silius reading in a Booke.

Sil. 

Ola virtus vera nobilitas.
Vertue is onely true nobilitie,
So speakes our times best Tutor *Seneca*,
And 'tis divinely spoken, like himselfe.
True Philosopher, for what is't to man
For to be borne noble, and yet detaine
Th'ignoble mind of vice, licentious will,
Such no way are alide to noblenesse.
Times hellbred, base, ignoble noble blood,
Runnes through his veines, that's only great not good.
Farre better live a private life with thee,
Thou sweete companion to Well-minded man.
Here's no seducing Pompe, no clouds of vice,
Nor fogges of vanitie obscures mans sight

From the direct to wayes directly ill.
This seale confirme the sequell of my life
To immitate the good that thou presents.
Kisseth the Booke.

Enter Valens and Proculus.

Val. Still plodding at your Book, shall we ne'r find
You otherwise; Pox of this sad mutt'ring
To your selfe; hang't up, 'tis a disease to
Sweet alacritie, of all true joviall
Minds to be abhord, come.— *Offers to take away the Booke.*

Sil. Prethe disist.

Pro. How scurvily this shewes, how ill in you,
That Should be fram'd just of the times fashion.

Sil. Thats learning, and valour; or should be so
At least; and not in outsides fond delight,
Whereon Times Puffe-paste costly coxcombe, all
His great little wit, and wealth, thinkes best bestow'd
To please his Mistri's Eye; when all mans minde
Should bend his course to follow virtues steps.

Val. Out upon't; drinke me and whore; those are
The vertues best, and best accepted 'mong
Gallants of this age.

Sil. Th'are gallant sots,
Silly and senseleſſe; what's all the delight,
That seemes so pleasing to the itchie whorer?
But like the Itch, scratch't raw, 'tis still the sorer
'Twill smart to purpose; make you to find out
An obscure grave, cold as the snowy Alpes,
There, in a hollow circle of the night
Lust breeds more cause of terrour then delight.

Pro. Fie *Cajus* fie, turn'd Satire gainst your friends,

Sil. Alas y'are blind my friends, and I am sorry.

Val.

Val. Pish; wer't not for sparkling beauty, pretious woman,
Woman I say, that faire and winning creature,
Whose ne'r to be resisted delicate touch,
Divides us into all the sweets of sense,
Wer't not for her, (glorious sweet fac'd woman,)
Man makes no use of his Creation,
What saies our *Roman* phrase,
Si non letaris vivens letabere nunquam.
Leave then this puling study and be rul'd.
Hang up Philosophy that Seeane of sorrow,
Come goe with me to beauties faire abode,
There, if you'l make true tryall of your strength,
Let it be there imploy'd; doe but withstand
The catching beauties there, and spight of all
Their powerfull charmes and incantations
Come freely off, untainted with the Act.
For ever Ile abjure to be seduc'd
By the worlds quainte enticements; betake me
Wholly to Philosophy, and practise
The same in life.

Pro. So shall *Proculus.*

Sil. O were I sure that sworne you'd keepe, & not
Infringe your vowes (though noble wisedome bids,
To shunne the glorious strumpets licorish snares,)
You soone should finde me sudaine, dare to stand,
The baites of whoorish fortitude unmoov'd.

Val. Talke not but do't.

Pro. Therein consists the Test
Of compleat man.

Sil. Then on this booke take Oath,
Sweare that by all the good therein contain'd,
And all that's good the vertues of true Man,
At my returne free from adulter'ate sinne

To live true friends to vertue ever after
You ſhall prevaile.
Both. We ſweare.
Vall. So deepely ſweare
That may *Ioves* thunder ſtrike when we forſake
Our vowes.
Sil. Tis well, lead on; And if I ever prove
Falſe to *Syllana* puniſh me great *Iove.* *Exeunt.*

Enter Veneria the Bawd, Calphurnia, Hem and Stitch, Panders.

Bawd. Hey ho, what *Hem, Hem, Hem,* what *Hem*
Hem. Here Miſtreſſe. (I ſay.
Bawd. *Stitch*, oh *Stitch.*
St. In your ſide Madam.
Bawd No *Stitch*, orethwart my heart, O I ſhall die;
The bottle, the bottle, the bottle knave the bottle.
Shee drinkes.
Cal. Doe doe drinke and be fatter ſtill up with't,
Why ſo my brave bundle of guts and garbiſh.
Bawd. I you may well ſay drinke, well may I drink
All ſorrow from my heart, for I thanke you
Ten thouſand ſeſterces, this day is loſt
To our victorious Empreſſe *Meſſallina*;
*Witneſſe the Number five and twentie,
All in the circuit of a day and night,
And yet ſhees ready for a new delight.
Cal. She may, for who but ſhee dares do the like,
For a poore ſubject, alſe the number ſerves,

* *Meſſallina Claudij Cæſaris conjux hanc regalem exiſtimans palam elegit in id certamen nobiliſſimam e proſtitutis ancillam mercenarie ſtipis eamque die ac nocte ſuperavit quinto ac viceſimo concubitu Plin. lib.* 10. *cap.* 62.

On

On greateſt Queenes moſt ſervants ſtill attends.
Bawd. Hadſt not provocations to enable thee,
Confection of Cantharides, Diaſaterion Eringoes,
Snailes, Oyſters, Alligant, and could not theſe
Make thee hold out with five and twentie;
'Twas but a Forenoones worke, a forenoones worke
You paltry puling.
Cal. I, in your young dayes.
Bawd. In my young dayes, I tell thee ſmall Flour-(der,
Old as I am and fat, I durſt yet wager,
To lay twice the number of ſuch ſhrimpes as thee,
That they ſhould ne're riſe more.
Cal. Yes with a Pox.
I have not the Court art to kill my lovers,
Nor draw them on with witchcraft, *Circean* charmes,
Nor is it luſt, but want makes me a trader,
And thoſe I clip with, I muſt like at leaſt,
Let *Romes* brave Empreſſe do her liking,
Stitch. I ſhe's a brave Roman dame indeed.
Hem. And thoſe Mad-dames are the beſt doers
Stitch.
Cal. *Calphurnia* loathes varietie of men,
Times big bone Animalls ſo apt to pleaſe,
Th'Empreſſe will whets not my appetite,
Beſides you know I'me not for durance,
Wanting the daily viſits of beſt Doctors,
To make me broths of diſſolv'd Pearle and Amber,
Which well conſidered will not quit the coſt,
She won the wager, I am glad I loſt.
Bawd. Glad I have loſt,
Let me come to her, Ile claw you Minkes, glad
I have loſt, and which goes neareſt my heart;
To raile, and none to raile againſt but tall
Proper and goodly able men, calling

Them big-bond Animals, O blasphemy.
Why Phisgig; must I keepe thee rich in cloathes,
To want that ever pleasing sweet,
Hony, and Sugar candy delight; which the
Travest high spirited glistering Ladies,
(Such as make Punies of their pettie Lords)
Account their heaven, their onely happinesse,
Never but discontented when they are
Out of Action; and are you defective now;
Fallen out (forsooth) with the felicitie
You shu'd take in man; O most absurd,
Not to be suffer'd, utter'd, nor indur'd,
It is intollerable; it is, it is, it is,
Thou muddy minded piece of mischiefe it is.

St. Hem, Mistris, here comes our fellow Pander
The Lord *Sausellus*.

Hem. All of a house, but not all fellowes *Stitch*,
And yet we hope to be Sir Panders; nay since
Great-ones be of that profession, and thrive so by it,
It cannot chuse but be a brave profession.

St. Oh, tis a good,
A goodly brave profession; 'tis the best,
Best streame to fish in, be ne'r so impious,
Gold stiles the royall villaine vertuous.

Sauf. Here, here my most pretious procurers
Downe, and adore our royall Empresse,
And me the messenger of these glad tidings;
Proud is her highnesse of the wager wonne,
Yet scorning the advantage of the losse
Trebly returnes your owne, with a reward,
And signe of her high favour ever after.

Ba. I hope her mightinesse receiv'd content,
And will make bold with my poore house hereafter.

Sauf. Yes, with your house a little bold her yet,

Silius comes hither ſtraight brought by his friends
Valens and *Proculus*, your beſt wills worke,
To make him ſerve her pleaſure.
Ba. Pleaſure her,
What? *Silius* a private gentleman of *Rome*
And be ſo groſſe as not to pleaſure her.
Which of you gallants wu'd not pleaſure an
Emp'reſſe; that a man ſhould be ſo very a ſot
As not do, Oh 'twere abominable.
Sauf. But hee's a man of preciſe abſtinence,
And hardly will be drawne by any woman.
Ba. Hoy day; not drawne by woman ſayd you,
If he come here, he ſhall be hang'd and drawne,
And dry drawne to; not drawne by a woman!
Gogs nigs that's fine ifaith.
Sauf. See, here they come prepar'd; I muſt withdraw
For a more apt imployment, ſhew your skills,
Women through luſt and Hell will worke their wills.
Exit.

Enter Silius, Valens, Proculus.

Val. Come Sir, wee'l enter you.
Sil. Moſt certaine
Into the divels vaulting ſchoole; where luſt
In triumph rides or'e ſhame and innocence,
Am I not in Hell.
Pro. O ſilly *Silius.*
Cannot a ſweet ſhap't gallant like my ſelfe,
Enter the houſe where *Venus* veſtalls live
But it muſt needs be Hell, ha, ha, ha.
Ba. Welcome Princely Spirits,
Sweet faces, rich cloathes, and exquiſite bodies,
Make you for ever (my moſt curious clients)
Pruriently

Pruriently, pleasing to the blood of beautie,
Hem and *Stitch* some stooles and cushions quicke.
Sil. What have you brought me to your Sempsters (house.
Ba. These are no idle persons.
Sil. Is this your lusty kindred, sweet pleasure
Which angles soules to hell, as men hooke fish;
I, this is she the bane of all devotion,
She whose inticements turnes weake men aside
From the right way of vertue, throwing em downe
Into the gulfe of all confusion;
From whence me thinks those dreadfull soules I heare
Now at this instant cursing of your Sex;
Your sinne affected trimings to entice
Which implicates the wretched mind of man
Crying with horrour 'gainst your impudence.
O woman, woman, thy bewitching motion,
Fooles wisedome, reason, and blinds all devotion.
Ba. What is the man detracted from his wits tro.
Sil. Out thou devourer up of maiden heads
Ba. Hoy day, I a devourer of maiden heads,
That (with joy be it spoken) I have not had
A maidenhead these fiftie yeares.
Vall. Prethee be not thus bitter unto 'em,
Poore necessary evils they pleasure us. (sures,
Sil. Out on your beastly, your most senseleſſe plea-
That makes you reasonleſſe, esteeming best
Those things delight you most.
Cal. O I could stand,
My lifetime here to heare this *Silius* raile.
Sil. Note but the end of all your lustfull pleasures,
All breed diseases, griefes, reproaches foule,
Consumption of the body, and the soule,
Engender sorrowes and sotishnesse,
Forgets all prudence, growes most insolent,

Breeds

Breeds th' Epilepsie that falling evill;
Begets murder, makes a man a divell,
O'rethrowes whole families, confounds the just,
Foisteth in children illigitimate,
Corrupts all humane sweet societie.
The various paths of lust are all uneven,
Her pleasures dreadfull plagues the scourge of heaven.

Enter Emperesse, and Saufellus attending with a cap.

Emp. Our soveraigne good is pleasure unto which
None can attaine but valiant men and wise.
Sil. Oh. *Sil. falls on his knees.*
Emp. *Silius* thou shalt not fall unlesse I fall,
Nor rise without me, we love thee *Cajus*
Thou soule of musicke breath, breath and enchant.
Musicke.
With thy delicious Tones while thus we bend,
And health our love mirrour of men to thee.
She drinkes.
Sil. Foole that I am, thou hast undone thy selfe,
Keepe in my vertue or this fiery triall
Flames thee to Cindars.
Emp. Fill for him, ist prepar'd?
Sauf. With deepest Art. (draught
Emp. Here pledge, and pledge freely, a heatty
(As I began) up witht; so tis well, this, *Sil. drinks.*
This fayling, pure, precise one now is silenc'd,
Conveigh him to our bed, Natures delight
Where when he wakes he may admire and burne
Be mad in love to pleasure free in us.
Thanks *Valens*, and *Proculus*, *Cæsar* dispatcht
To *Ostia*, wee'l finde fit time to make you
Shine

Shine in glory, all shall finde rich rewards.

Exit Emperesse and Sauſellus.

Ba. May you for ever gliſter like the Sunne.

Val. Silius y'are ſnar'd; and we our wager wonne.

Exit.

Hoboyes. Enter Emperour, Claudius, Meſſallina Narciſſus, Paſlas, Caliſtus, Sauſellus, with attendance.

Emp. Swift nimble time the ſeaſon of the yeare
(To offer ſacrifice unto the Gods)
Calls us with ſpeed from *Rome* to *Hoſtia*, in
Which our abſence, ſweet, deare then my life,
We doe implore, uſe all the carefull meanes
That may preſerve that life and happineſſe
Thy love aſſures us; which if want of health
Should bate thee joy; *Cæſar* were not himſelfe
Diſaſter, grieſes, diſeaſes pale and wan
Wu'd make me marble, ſuch is th'affiance,
The ſtrong perſwaſion of that love I beare
To thee thou ſtarre on earth my onely bliſſe
Beare record heaven, bleſſe thou this parting kiſſe.

Exit Emperour, cum ſuis.

Meſſ. Farewell my life, my love, my royall, Foole
Shallow braine fop, dull ignorance adeiu,
The kindeſt Cuckold woman ever knew.
Sauſellus draw nigh,
Now is the wiſht for time to crowne delight
Turne night to day and day into the night,
Prepare for ſtirring, Maſque, midnight revells
All rare varietie to provoke deſire;
Then haſte and fetch thoſe envide Adamants
Rome moſt admires for fooliſh chaſtitie,
When we have graſpt them here, ſurfeits riot

Shall

Shall squeese their spungie vertue into vice.
If they deny to come, let vengeance fall
Like to that all devouring thunders flame
Which fierd the world, be mercilesse and kill.
Rome shall take notice, our incensed blood,
Like to *Medusa's* shall to Serpents turne,
Poys'ning the Ayre, where locall chastitie
Claymes least prehemineuce. (lent
Sauf. Spoke like your selfe beyond thought excel-
O it becomes you rarely; thinke what you are
All glory drosse is, in comparison
Of that all rare inestimable worth,
You truly owe; all admir'd beautie past,
And that to come with full attractive force
Have fixt their lively characters in you.
Divinest faire; earth breathes not such another,
Twere madnesse longer your delights to smother:
I'me fierd with joy to see your high blood free.
Continue with encrease, adde flame to flames.
Burne high bright glorious wonder of thy Sex,
Act what your thoughts shall prompt too, I in all
Am onely yours at whose commanding will
Ile death and horrour wade to save or kill.
Offers to goe.
Mess. Stay er'e you goe resolve us; what is that
Stagerites Name, he that last night i'th play
Did personate the Part of *Troylus.*
Sauf. *Menester* (glorious Empresse) thats his name.
Mess. *Menester* how that name works on my blood
And like a violent Tyde, swells me with full
Desire to know the man; it must be so
Command him to attend our will to night.
Sauf. Know mightie Queen I by your looks perceiv'd
he gracefull Actor pleasing to your eyes,

And

And therefore already here in court, I
Have prepar'd him.

Mess. Diligent *Saufellus*, Ile to my chamber,
Admit him thither; be swift in returne, *Exit Sauf.*
We long for change to feede on various fruit;
Vp *Messallina* let thy mountaine will
Too long kept downe, fly to thy full desire,
Ile live in pleasure though I burne in fire. *Exit.*

Enter Saufellus with a Torch, Menester following.

Sauf. Come, come, come, this way, fie how I sweat,
This venery is a stirring businesse,
Remaine you here, Ile instantly returne. *Exit.*

Men. My heart that ne're yet shrunk begins to throb,
And my good *Genius* whispers in mine eare
A faire retreat; I am faire warn'd, and yet
I waver doubtfull.

Sauf. Fortunate Actor,
Now let thy best of action to the life
Court *Romes* rare Emp'resse to the height of pleasure,
Muster up all the powers of man in thee
To an united strength, prepare a part
To ravish, pleasure winne an Empresse heart,
Looke to't, prove active to yeeld full content,
Or else you die, die a most shametfull death,
So speed as you shall please. *Exit.*

Men. That's certaine death,
I, I that in *Pompeys*, spacious Theater
Acted the noble vertues of true man,
When the faire piercing lines so much prevail'd,
I felt a sacred flame runne through my braines,
And in this Orb of mans circumference,
My selfe at furious war within my selfe,

That

That in my lifes ſweet ſequell, I ſtill ſtriv'd
Wreſtled with fleſh and blood to immitate
The good I then preſented, but now, a
Cowvard plague, or elſe ſome Fiend rais'd from the
Pit of feare, hath all my goodneſſe to a
Period dropt; and I like chaffe, blowne on this
Wide worlds ſtage, am now to act my owne part,
Which muſt be vicious now, luſt ſtung vicious
With *Romes* majeſticke Empreſſe, whoſe command
Strikes dead in the refuſall, dead; a word
That quakes even the moſt valiant He, though leaſt
Expreſt, if by eſcape I thinke my ſelfe
Secure in ſome remote ſoile, her revenge
Will with the ſelfeſame ſtroake there ſtrike me dead,
'Mong petty emminent perſons now tis
Common; then Princes cannot faile, their Armes
Are long and large, compulſion bids me on
Who ere ſhall reade my ſtory then ſhall ſay
'Tis forc'd compulſion, and not rich reward,
No high Court favourers made *Meneſter* ſinne.
* Inchanting earth's temptation is in vaine,
He baſely, baſely ſinnes that ſinnes for gaine.
If not for gaine, ſhall I commit for feare,
For feare to die, I muſt, I will not, keepe
There my minde, and with chaſt fortitude
O be my barre to this laſcivious act,
And cleave me to the Center er'e I yeeld,

Enter Meſſallina.

Your pardon glorious Empreſſe,
Ther's ſomething in me workes ſo powerfull,

* *Alijs largitionu aut ſpei magnitudine ſibi ex neceſſitate Culpam. Tacit. lib. 11.*

I dare not, dare not yeeld to your content.

Mess. How's this, dare not, is that answer for us
Why foole, poore scumme of the Earth do'st know
What tis to stop an Empresse loftie will:
Saufellus, within there, a Guard, wee'l learne
You better manners, hoist him on the Racke,

Enter Saufellus and Guard.

To the Racke with him, teare limbe from limbe, dare (not
We will enforce thee wretch.

They put him on the Rack.

Sauf. O dog; not doe;
Vp with the Snow ball, melt him, so, so, so.

Mess. Shall our high favours, (equall to base and
Mercinare Trulls) prove common put offs,
What say you now Sir.

Mon. That I am truly miserable, weake,
And vile, not being able to endure
This torment, O let me downe; my paine, but
Not my minde yeelds to your bed, I doe
Consent, consent.

Mess. Ha, ha, doe you so, Sir;
Let him downe, and let him finde sudaine cure
Command our Doctors, feede him hot and high,
Pleasur's a Princesse full felicitie.

Exit. Mess.

Mon. Mans a weake Bulrush; all his fortitude
Brittle at best; witnesse these tenter'd, limbes,
Witnesse the Racke, which teares me from the sight
Of sacred vertue; whose just anger now,
Like a denyed wooer puts me off,
Blushing and despairing; heaven out of sight
Mans out of heart, all virtues lose their light.

Exeunt omnes.

ACT

ACT. 2. SCENE. 1.

Enter Lepida in her night attire with a Booke and a lighted Taper.

Lep. MY servants all are fast 'tis dead of night,
And yet my restlesse senses want their rest;
This was not wont to be, tis wondrous strange
I feare (nor is't unlike) my daughter, my
Most ambitious, irreverent daughter,
Dead to good counsell, now in great *Cæsars*
Absence, most apt for ill; takes her full flight
To the loose life of all licentiousnesse,
Now at this instant wrongs him, and that the
Gods, whose eyes see blackest deeds, doe see and
Abhorre; and therefore caus'd me thus to wake
From dead resembling sleepe, to pray
T'oppose her ill with good, heaven I obay.

A Bell rings as far off, three Roman dames knocke within.

1. Open the doore, O noble *Lepida*
Open the doore.

Lep. What ill includes this noyse.

2. Open the doore, O save us from the gripes

Knock againe.

Of Rape and Ruine.

Lep. That was a womans voyce most certaine 'twas;
I will no longer stay you. *Opens the doore.*

3. O save us from the Rape, death doggs us
At the heeles.

1. Our parents and husbands slaine
In their beds this night, have payd lifes forfeit
For our escape.

2. For whom there is no hope
If shelter'd not under your wings of safetie.
3. She is your daughter that commands this ill.
Lep. Woe is me wretch, accursed be the time
That brought her forth; O may it ever be,
For ever bard the ranke of blessed houres.

Bell rings as weere at hand.

1. Harke, harke, they come, that fatall bell rings their,
Approach; turne us to Ayre some whirlewind, er'e
We perish through spotted whoredome.

Enter Sauf. the two Ruffans, and Baud.

Sauf. O are you here.
Ba. And have we found you out.
O you abominable pictures of
Peevish vertue, ye thread bare thin cheek't chastitie,
Ye Puppets.
Lep. I am amaz'd, if from my daughter sent,
Tell me ye frightfull villaines her demand.
Sauf. Them there, whose paltery puling honestie,
Merits no favour but a world of mischiefe,
They must live at Court.
Ba. There to live, and brave.
Hem. To shine in pearle, and gold flow in treasure.
St. Fed with delicious Cates, to swim in pleasure.
Ba. Toft on the downy beds of dalliance. (breath.
Lep. Peace hell bred hagge, stop thy unhallow'd
Sauf. Dispatch, resolve to goe or die. (throat.
Lep. Then die,
Arme you brave *Roman* Dames, Terrestriall stars,
Arm'd with faire fortitude resolve to die,
That when y'are gone, I may looke up and see

Your

Your chast thought starres in the Celestiall spheares;
Is it not better die then live at court?
Rackt, torne and tost on proud dishonours wheele,
There to be whoor'd, your excellence defil'd,
Rather be free, be free rare spirits for
Succeeding times to wonder at; spurne, spurne
In contempt of death, at deaths base strife,
To die for vertue is a glorious life.

All. O blest encouragement.

1. All are so willing, ther's not one of us
Wu'd wish to live, so fairest mind farewell,
Behold we linke in love, thus arm'd to die,
Strike slaves, mount soules, fly to eternitie. *kild.*

Lep. Mischievous Monsters, O what have you don.

Ba. Take this, this, and this for me, ye Puppets
Of purity. *Baud stabs at them with her knife, and in her going off, is shut in by Lepida.*

Lep. Wu'd you be gone!
Nay you damb'd hell-hagge I'le preserve you safe
Manutius Folio wake, wake from drowsie sleepe.
Exit Lepida.

Ba. How's this, lockt in, what the great divell
Will become of me. *Lepida within.*

Lep. Murder murder, what ho, *Manutius* awake.

Ba. How she bawles, vengeance stop your throat.

Enter Lepida with her two Servants.

Lep. O see where murder'd chastitie lies slaine,
Vnder my tragicke roofe this fatall night.

Ser. Sad dismall accident.

Lep. Here take this Baud,

She hath a large hand in this impious act
Take, hang her by the heeles then let my dogs,
Compell'd through hunger teare, eate her alive,
I must to Court there prosecute the rest. *Exit*

Ser. Remove those bodies I'le take charge of this,
O thou insufferable Bitch Whore, Bawd,
Have you beene actor in this blooddy Scene?
You shall be gnawne with dogges for't, totter'd
And peeecemeale torne, you shall you rotten
Stinking tunne of decay'd Letchery you shall.
Yet, I will set thee free, grease me now finely,
Finely ith' Fist, you know the Art, mony
Will corrupt, 'tis beggery to be honest.

Ba. Hold ther's my purse, the better part is gold
Performe thy promise, I'le advance thy state
At Court promote thee.

Ser. To weare brave cloathes.

Ba. Rich, wondrous rich.

Ser. And shall I have a wench.

Ba. A very daintie device, a Springer,
One that shall make thy constitution curvet
And winde about thee like a Skeine of Silke
Titckle, tickle, tickle thee my brave bully:

Ser. Sayst thou so, my old motions procurer,
Goe thy wayes—stay—O wondersull whats that
There betwixt thy teeth, gape.

He gags her.

Ba. Au, au, au.

Ser. We must be honest here, nay you shall goe
Not to be tickle, tickle, tickl'd, but
To be totter'd with your heeles aloft
To be totter, totter, totter'd my brave Bawd,
To be totter'd. *Exeunt.*

Enter

Enter Messallina.

Mess. *Menester, Valens, Proculus*, not all
No, not a world of favorites can yeeld
To us that free delight in dalliance which
Silius gives, he must not live at *Forum*,
Though it be neare at hand 'tis too farre off
Calphurnia.

Enter Calphurnia.

Calph. Your highnesse pleasure.
Mess. Cause *Cajus*, *Silius* to be sent for straight,
And let Harmonius Musicks ravishing Ayres,
Breath our delight.
Calph. To your accomplisht wish. *Exit, Cal.*
Mess. Circle me round you Furies of the night,
Dart all your fiery lust-stung Arrowes here.
Musicke.
Here, here, let *Circe* and the *Syrens* charmes,
Poure their inchantments; Monarch of flames,
Fill with aluring poyson these mine eyes
That I may with the mistie soules of men,
And send them tumbling to th' *Acharusian* Fen;
'Twere an all pleasing object unto thee,
Thou great Arck-Ruler of the lowe *Abysse*,
Like to *Cadmean Semele* I wu'd burne
Rather then want this my implor'd desire,
And be consum'd in thunder, smoake, and fire;
Let petty Queenes dull appetite dread feare,
I'le be my selfe sole pleasures Queene in all.
Ha, whats this? cease that Musicke there,
A suddaine strange and drousie heavinesse
Enchants my tender eyes to close their lights.
Dormit.

Enter three Furies with the Arrowes of Pride, Lust, and Murder.

1. From those blew flames burning dimme,
Where black soules in sulphure swimme.
Darke infernall Den below,
Lakes of horrour, paine and woe.
2. From dread Thunder smoaking fire,
We come. we flye at thy desire.
3. To fire thy mind, lewdly inclind.
1. To deeds unjust, murder and lust.
2. Dreaming see, at thee, at thee.
3. Furies dart sinnes potent night.
1. Sable shafts of endlesse night.

Eight Furies dance an Antricke and depart.

Messalina awakes.

Mess. Furies enough, I'me fully satisfide,
A Plurisie of lust runnes through my veines
I could graspe with any.

Enter Silius

Sil. Me above all.
Mess. O the unsounded sea of my delight
In thee my *Silius*, tis miraculous,
Ineffable, never to be expreft
By learnings deepest Art.
Sil. Glory of Queenes,
Cease to enchant with words that can so charme.
Mess. And Scarfe about thy neck, my Ivory Arme
Practise upon thy lips the Energie
Of sweet alurements, shoot into thine eyes
Amorous glances stirring dalliance,
Embracements, passions, such as shall beget

Perpetuall

Perpetuall appetite, that all the gods
May in beholding emulate our joy,
Enveloped with pleasures sweetest sweets,
Ambrosiack kisses thus. *Kisse.*

Sil. Delicate Nectar.

Mess. Redoubled thus and thus. *Kisse again double*

Sil. O I am all Flame,
A scorcht inchanted flame and I shall burne
To Cinders with delight, debar'd to quench
Fervour with fervour, violent flame with flames.

Mess. Thou art too noble a substance to imbrace
Thy wife *Syllana*, be sudaine, kill her,
She must not live.

Sil. How?

Mess. Be not ignorant,
* That singular alone we must enjoy
The freedome of thy body undebard
Least let to pleasure, by this I charme thee. *Kisse.*

Sil. O that delicious melting kisse prevailes;
Sucks dry the sweetnesse of a soule distrest,
Poysons my blood and braine, and makes me apt
To doe an outrage. I should loathe to name:
O if I er'e was gracious in your sight, *Sil. kneeles.*
Desist faire beauties abstract, I implore;
Spur me not on to murders horrid act
Which I shall ever rue; let it suffise,
I'me onely yours, never *Syllana's* more;
Sworne a perpetuall exile from her bed,
Exit, Messalina.
Vanisht so soone, how wondrous strange seemes this.

* *Nam in Caium Silium Iuventutis Romanæ pulcherrimum ita exarserat, ut Iuniam Syllanam, nobilem faminam matrimonio ejus exturbaret vacuoque adultero potiretur. Tacit. Lib. 11.*

Enter Messallina with a Pistoll.

Mess. Death and destruction satisfie my will
Or take't in thy bosome, I'me intemperate
Briefly resolve.
Sil. Hold, be not so respectlesse
Of him that loves you dearer then his life,
Dreadlesse of death I speake it, what is death?
A bug to scarre th'ignoble cowards minde
The valiant never; did the Fates conspire
And terrible death in the most horrid shape
Iter'e put on threat, despaire, and ruine,
Yet it should ne're affright the soule of *Silius*;
Th'impatient sudaine cause of discontent
In your rare worth, onely torments me more
Then were I rack't upon *Ixions* wheele
To perpetuitie; be gracious then
To him that does repent, confesse his errour,
Seal't with this kisse.
Mess. Did *Lucius Cataline*
Spare wife nor childe, for *Orestillas* love,
And must our high borne favours be slighted
Put off with bare perswasives.
Sil. Oh be pleas'd.
Mess. Let mighty Queenes, majestick emminence
In the high pitch of their ambition learne
Of us to hate corivalls in their love
Trampling the Torch of *Hymenæall* rites
Vnder their feete.
Sil. The attractive force
Of those amazing eyes those glorious lights
Fixt in the Firmament of your sweet face
Shall make me undergoe the worst of ill,

Though

Though with the forfeiture of life I hazard
A death more terrible then *Alcides* was.

Mess. I love thee now, like to a burning glasse
Th'ast fier'd afresh th'affection of my minde
More violent then ever; be gone, be gone,
Hasten *Syllanas* death then come to Court,
There the Emperiall Diadem of *Rome*
Dreadlesse of *Cæsar* shall impale thy Front
* Like *Iove* and *Iuno* in a nuptiall knot,
Wee'l knit the bands of *Hymen*, and out shine
The glorious Tapers of the golden Sunne,
Whirle through the stately streets of spacious *Rome*
Like glistring *Phaeton* in an Orient chaire.
That with the bare report, swift fame shall strike
Amazement through the world Monarchall state
All-gazing eyes fixt on our rich attire
Languish in dreames our stately state admire.

Sil. Ravisht in thought panting amaz'd I stand
At your Harmonious speech Emphatically.
Ambitious blood, like to the Bankes of Nyle
Ore-flowes this Orbe of mans circumference,
And points my actions thus their way to ill
Aspiring Armes *Lavolto* when they kill. *Exit Sil. Presenting his naked Poniard.*

Goe the influence of whose power starres,
Mounts thy imperiall lot to set aloft
On the high Orbe of our affection,
Like the bright rising orientall Sun,
When it salutes *Aurora*; 'bove the choice

* *Messallina nomen matrimonij cum Cajo Silio concupivit; ob magnitudinem infamiæ; cujus apud prodigos novissima voluptas est Tacit.*

Of five and twentie *Iove*-like Ganimends,
Who charm'd, and wrapt in wanton dalliance,
Live fir'd with admiration; O pleasing,
More pleasing sweet to my insate desire,
Then was to *Synon Illions* lóftie fire.
Mess. Shall *Messallina* in her flourishing youth
Like dull and tame, Nobilitie live coopt,
Confin'd and mew'd up singular to one;
No *Cæsar* no, t'were fooles Philosophy,
And I abjure't; there is no musick in't,
Those of our Sex the mindes of sots containe
And are of no brave spirits that deny
Pleasure, the heaven of my Idolatry.

Enter Sauſellus and Lepida.

Lep. Plagues yet unfelt light on thee mischievous
Slave, villane, dog, murderer rot as thou livest.
Mess. Mother the cause of your distemprature.
Lep. Murder in thee, in thee thou wicked Impe
And that thy substitute by the ordain'd
Gainst the most noble mindes of chastitie,
Whose innocent blood like th' Atlantick sea
Lookes red with murder, and cries out to heaven
For justice and revenge; O hadst thou first
Then beene the Author of so foule a fact
Made thy owne passage, happy woman I.
Mess. Beldame give ore, or Ile disclaime all smoothnesse,
Ther's nothing done that's wisht undone by us.
Lep. Ist even so, then too too ill farewell
Truths story shall relate to after times
My love to thee; hate to thy desp'rate crimes.

Mess.

Mess. Pish to your chamber dotard be advis'd.
Sauf. Goe and a mischiefe dambe you, and all your Pittifull Sex.
Mess. We doe commend thy care,
Joy'ith performance of our strict command,
Which shall from hence forth stile thee favorite
To us, that will command thy fortunes rise.
Sauf. And all those fortunes, favours, life and all,
Shall like an *Atlas* undergoe the weight
Of your imperious will, be it toth' death
Of Parents, massacre of all my kin,
To exceede the divell, act any sinne.
Mess. For which we thus enseame thee, *Kisses him.*
Sauf. O *Dulce*,
Divinest goddesse whom my soule adores,
Multiply that sweet touch of rare delight,
And from the Garden of *Hesperides*,
Those delicate delicious rubie lips,
Make me immortall, quench, quench the burning heat
Which like th'immoderate thirst of *Tantalus*,
(Scorching the medowes of my solid flesh)
Dries up the Rivers of my crimson blood,
And as the gaping tongue tide earth for raine
Opens her griefe, so in my lookes behold,
View my distresse; make me to live or die.
Mess. Graspe me *Sausellus*; lets have a sprightly dance,
Swift footing apts my blood for dalliance.
Sauf. Musicke, rich musicke there; O that my skill
Could transcend mortall.
Mess. Tush: wee'l accept thy will.
Dance a Coranto.

Enter

Enter Lepida.

Sauf. What divell sends her back,
Mess. Pish minde her not. (dismai'd
Lep. Nature constraines me back, what though
Shall I desist, O then shees lost for ever,
No; I will bend with fairest faire demeane.
To save her soule I'le make my foot my head,
Mothers were Monsters else not truly bred,
Give my speech once more freedome.
Mess. You'l force us through unmannerly exclaimes
To rest the strictnesse of our dread command
Lep. I come not bent with wrath, but to implore
On bended knees, with penitentiall teares,
T'appease the Gods for thy full Sea of sinne,
Such is a mothers love, and such is mine;
Prove thou my like, thy soule shall never fall
Into those damned sinnes it nourisheth;
Which like a ponderous *Argosey* full frought,
Cust on the mountaine top of some bigge wave,
In the descent, falls on the fearefull Rock
And splits in peeces irrecoverable,
So fatall death upon the wings of night
Whirles the blacke soule in her triumphant Car
To the *Tartarian* vales; where crown'd in flames,
Tumbling descend to dreadfull *Orcus* Cell,
That mercilesse pit of bottomlesse despaire,
To fry in those blew flames of feare for ever,
In never ending endlesse paine for ever.
If mothers teares were e're of force to move,
Let these of mine take place; strive to repent,
Thinke what a horrid thing it is to see

There is feare above us; feare still beneath us,
Feare round about, and yet no feare within us.
Mess. I doe begin to melt.
Lep. Heavens blessings on thee.
Sauf And hells curse on thee; tis high time to speak,
O be your selfe divinest faire on earth,
This idle superstitious lecturing
Proceeds of malice; what? to make you childe
And slave to her desires.
Lep. O impious devill.
Mess. No more, live and be thankfull.
Exit. Mess. and Saufel.
Lep Ha, howes that?
Live and be thankfull; am I then contemn'd
Is all my labour in a moment lost.
Live and be thankfull; sure I doe but dreame,
It cannot be, nature against it selfe
Should so rebell; O foole, foole that I am
With vaine hope thus to play the flatterer.
Mors ærumnarum quies; mors omnibus finis.
Dissolve the glassie pearles of mine eyes,
That *Niobe*-like I may consume in teares,
And nevermore behold day light agen.
Pish, all this is but talke; and talke I must,
Fly from me soule and turne my earth to dust.
Must I then live to see my daughters shame,
Crack, crack poore heart; sterne death let fly thy dart,
Send my sad soule to the *Elysium* shades
That there it might drinke *Lethe*, and forget
It ever liv'd in this mortallitie.
Parcæ dispatch; when, when I say; no, no,
Falls distracted.
Then will I act *Medeas* murd'ring part
Vpon my staine of blood; that gods and men
May sit and laugh, and plaudite my revenge.

Ye disinall sisters of the fatall night,
Rise, rise, and dance hells roundelaies for joy;
Rhamnusia finds imployment for you all.
Follow, follow, follow, follow, follow.
Note with your grim aspects the courts of Kings,
See how the politicke statesman for his ends,
Sits hammering mischiefes; and how Toad-like swels
Bombaste with treasons riches; see ther's lust,
Brave Madam, lust temptations painted whore
Divinely worshipt by the bastard brood
Of knaves and fooles.
Ye dread and irefull furies i'st not true.
Why then imploy your burning whips of steele,
Lash with eternall lashes, there, there, there,
Excellent Furies how you doe excell,
So, so, so, so, tis holy day in hell.

Syllana drawne out upon a Bed as sleeping, to whom Silius with a light Torch enters.

Sil. O what a fiery combate feeles my soule,
The *Genius* good and bad that waights on man,
Shakes natures frame, trembles this Microcosme,
There vertue pleads for sleeping innocence,
For love, true love, chast thoughts, and vertuous acts
Which entertain'd within a constant brest
Makes man triumphant crown'd immortall blest.
But O the pondrous plummets of blacke vice,
Suppresse those pure imaginations,
Which breake like lightning onely for a flash,
Wanting the true materiall to impell,
And to continue this false clocke of life
From its exorbitant course; such like are
Majesticke title, and the Empresse,

That unpeer'd excellence, bewitching dalliance;
Soule of temptation sweete, so charmes all sense,
Vertue I loath, like politick states whose good
Depends on ill, worke their attempts in blood.

Syla. O my affrighted soule art thou there sweet;
Then am I safe; t'was but a dreame I see,
A waking walking in my sleepe wherein,
Me thought I saw neare to a River side,
Two lovely Turtles sit, like mornein *May*,
Adorn'd with all the glories of the Spring,
Their loves to either seem'd to sympathize,
And with such sober chastitie connex,
That their two hearts (as true loves ever should,
Like fire and heate inseperate a like)
Shew'd like the splendor of a heart that liv'd
In sacred flames; in unextinguisht flames
Of chast desires, free from the tainted spot
Of petulent dalliance, till temptations snare
Appear'd *Parthenope* like; that with her charmes
Work't so effectuall on the Turtle Male,
He (like *Troy*, firebrand, falsly that forsooke
Vnpitied *Oenon*) not alone content,
Alone forlorne, t'abjure his lovely mate,
But back return'd his black intents to further,
And to the height of lust he added murther
The very thought seem'd daggers to my brest,
That with the feare I wakt.

Sil. To sleepe thy last.

Presents his lomard to her.

Syl. Light of my life how's that?

Sil. Briefly this;
I'le be your dreames expositor thou must dies;
Die by this hand, this fatall instrument

Not

Nor must I seeme to yeeld a slave to pitie.

Sil. Sure, sure I dreame, dreame still, if not tell, O
Tell me my better selfe, whose killing words,
Wounds crueller then death; what cause, what offence
What ill desert in me, that wrong'd you never,
The Gods me witnesse beare.

Sil. Tis for no fault sustain'd on thy behalfe,
No; tis the Empresse Doome.

Syl. She; nay then.

Sil. 'Tis thee; that modell of creation,
Must through thy death participate alone
All that is man in me; And to that end
With sweetest concord of discording parts,
Out sings the *Syrens*, fiers this mansion
With haut, Ambition, *Romes* imperiall crowne,
And therefore I must kill; or else forgoe
All those bright shining glories, which what foole
Would be so nice.

Syl. Is there then no hope,
No comfort, no remorse; must I depart
Where I shall never see thy face agen,
Never behold those joyes, which *Hymens* Rites
Were wont to crowne with true loves flames,
Is there no remedy.
Farewell vaine world, my life is such a toy,
I will not with to live, t'abate thee joy.
Yet er'e I goe, grant this one courtesie,
'Tis the last kindnesse you shall ever give,
Place gainst my heart thy deadly pointed steele,
So, now farewell; death is for me most meet,
Strike sure and home, I doe forgive thee sweet.

Sil. Bravely resolv'd, and I'le performe thy will
As bravely thus, *Pretending a violent stab he flings away the Poniard.*

Not

Not to be Emp'rour of the spacious earth,
Live, live *Syllana* free.
Syl. Ist possible,
Twixt feare and hope strucke through with deepe amaze
I waver doubtfull.
Sil. Cease admiration
And be sure of this, though I must confesse
I hither came Arm'd with a full intent
To take thy life, yet *Silius* ne'r shall adde
To his libidinous life, a murderers name.
Of ills, 'tis ever best, the worst to shunne,
By murders murderers soules are ost undone;
I wish I were farre better then I am.
* But since without my most assured ruine
It cannot be; being so faire ingag'd
Into the Empresse favour, I must on
Make use of some devise cloakt with deceit,
That farre beyond persuasion may enforce
Thy death's beleefe.
Syl. Kill, O kill me rather.
Be not far crueller to thy selfe then death
To put to hazard on so slight a ground
Thy life for mine; I know the Emp'resse
That if least notice of my life she heare,
Not ire full *Nemesis* in swift revenge
Could be more speedy.
Sil. Pish, I will so worke
You shall not neede to feare, therefore as I,
At court with my continuance must make way

* *Neque Silius flagitii aut periculi nescius erat; sed certo si abnueret exitio, & nonnulla fallendi spe, simul magnis pramiis, opperiri futura, & præsentibus frui pro solatio habebat, Tacit.*

To cleare suspect; use you the matter so
Among your noble Family whereby
Argos ey'd *Envie* descrie me not; I
Shall securely live dreadlesse of danger.

Syl. Though you had struck my body full of wounnds
And I survive, my fierce revenge should be
Good against ill, how to preserve your life.

Sil. Th'art the true Emblem of a perfect wife,
For whose rare vertue, from my soule I wish
All husbands were the same, in that right way
A perfect husband truly ought to be.
Which since in me (ordain'd by powerfull Fate)
Never to be avoyded backward runnes,
Let my recursion from thy mind expell,
That Serpent foe to life; sad griefes extreame.
As grossely vaine in being remedilesse, and
Therefore shunne it, patient conjuence
Is the calme of trouble, best cure gainst care,
Gives greatnesse best content in meane estate.
Why doe I then (like Godlesse villains) tell,
The way t'heaven, yet lead the path to hell.
Mindes that will mount into superiour state,
Climbe mischiefes Ladder; vertuous actions hate.
Yet ist not so with *Silius*; I doe love
Those vertues in another, though I want
The like performance; nor shall my high ayme,
Rais'd on advancements top doe me more good,
Then th'injoyning free from the act of blood.
But I protract delay, ther's danger in't;
Video meliora, proboque, deteriora Sequor.
Never was man so infinitely
Bewitcht; charm'd, and inchanted as is *Caius*
Silius, to leave a constant wife; farewell,

We

We must part.
Syl. Must, must, O wretched word of
Mischievous command; must we part.
Sil. We must; nay prethee weepe not sweet,
Syl. Blessings like drops of raine shower on thy soule,
O that I might part dying in thine armes.
Sil Farewell.
Syl. Farewell.
Sil. Teares want their remedy,
There is no striving, gainst our destinie,

Exeunt.

ACT. 3. SCENE. 1.

Enter Annam Mela.

Mela.
MY brother gone to exile and I here,
So neare the Empresse Court, the Court of shame,
Where mischiefes hourely breed; how strange seemes this,
I have a will to follow, yet I want
My wills performance; not that I am sicke,
Wanting, or limbes, or libertie; which begets
More strange immaginations, yet all I can,
Comes short to guesse th'inscrutable meaning
That thus deteines me here, in vaine, in vaine;
The more I strive my senses I confound,
Then give it o're, salute thy mother earth.

Lies downe.

And

And rest, rest while thy poore distracted minde
Vpon the wings of thought takes flight and flie
Fly to the Iland of *Corcyra* there,
Learne the soules comfort swete Philosophy,
What infinite good 'tis to contemplate heaven,
For to that end the life of man is given.

Enter Montanus in disguise.

Mon Prove prosperous my designe upon this
Brother to the banisht *Seneca*,
Are you cought Sir?

Snatcheth Mela's Sword from behind him.

Mel. Ha, villaine what art thou.
Mon. A murderer and villaine, O Sir,
'Tis the best thriving trade and best imployd
'Gainst such malevolent Satyrists as you.
You that are all for vertue, a meere word,
When indeede ther's no such thing; say there be
None truly loves it but dies beggerly. (soul
Mel. Slave, rather dispatch me then torment m
With thy envenom'd scoffes 'gainst that that is
Most rare, most excellent.
Mon. A little more,
And then I'le speede you, excellent Ladies
Cannot disable with a charming spell,
(A trick of wit, a humour that they have)
Husbands they not affect; making free way
For *Atlas* backs to leape their lovely lappes,
But your Satyricall censure straight must passe,
Th'ones pride's scabd-hammd Rascalls, and the o
Mischiefes veneriall Trulls; these are fine tearmes,
Pray who made you a censurer of manners.

Mel. O slave,
Mon. T'upbraid such emminent persons
What madnesse durst the like, deserv'st not death,
Yes, yet your life is safe, passe but your vow
T'embrace a beautie I shall bring you to,
(More delicate then was the *Spartan* Queene)
One that shall pay large tribute night by night,
Give thee thy weight in gold for each delight.
Mel. Not I, I yeeld my body mercenary slave
To lust and lucre, no, though mines of gold
She could give oftner then those whorish lookes
Women take pride in, to bewitch mens soules;
First partch't to Cinders, 'gainst the burning Zone,
Be buried quicke; all torments possible,
(Stretcht on the Tenters of invention)
I gladly would (most willingly) endure
E're thy soule killing proffers enters here.
Mon. No? (me
Mel. Pish, for my death, ther's too much man in
To feare so sleight a scratch; let it come,
I will no budg a foote; strike faire and home,
T'is better die then live to live unjust,
Slave to th'unsounded Sea of womans lust.
Mon. Are you so confident, have at you Sir,
Offers to runne at him and flings downe the Weapon.
Your love, your love, 'tis onely that I seeke
I am no villaine, though I seem'd in show
But one that fearefull in these dangerous times
For to retaine a friend; led on by hope
Of your faire life, whom envie in your foes
Reports no lesse of; caus'd me through disguise,
To put to tryall your unvalued worth,

Which beyond man I find of such pure mold,
Sun-like your vertues outshine purest gold.

Mel. Beleeve me Sir ther's no such thing in me
Worthy your least Encomium.

Mon. But there is
A miracle, which but in me in part,
Through friendships deare respect incorporate.
And you shall binde me everlastingly
To blesse the houre we met.

Mel. As I am slow,
To friendships confidence (as tis requisite
For ev'ry one, and yet once enter'd in
Affect stabilitie, judge you the same,
A man that truly sensative well knowes,
Vertue to be but meerely adjective;
Wanting that soveraigne sweetnesse which directs
The minde to honest Actions; and therefore,
As friendship joynes with vertue; truly is,
The lover of love; each true friends propertie,
By that true blessing, sundry, wills connexion
Our hearts as hands unite, dilate affection,
That th'enlarge length, orbicular may spread
And ne'r finde end.

Mon. So am I yours.

Mel. You mine.

Mon. Vnparallel'd is that love where friends combine.

Enter Valens, Proculus, Menester.

Here comes the top top gallants of the time.

Mel. The fooles of the time; how are we bound to heaven
Exempt the bondage of these Palace Rats,
These, whose delights are last provocatives.

Mon.

Mon. Let us withdraw, and seeme to minde them not.

Men. Was men er'e blest with that excesse of joy
Equall to ours; to us that feele no want
Of high court favours lifes licentiousnesse;
Kings have their cares, and in their highest state,
Want those free pleasures crownes us fortunate.

Val. O happy state.

Mel. Glorious slave. ——— *Aside.*

Val. Thrice happy,
I'de not change Earth for *Ioves* felicitie.

Pro. Nor I, who wu'd, what inconsiderate he
For such a Mistris as the Emp'resse
Wu'd be so dull, as not make use of Art,
Forcing the bodies joviall able might,
To yeeld her expectation full delight.

Mon. Libidnious Goate. ——— *Aside.*

Val. I'de do't, though *Phaeton* like,
The hot receipt should fire this Fabrick.

Men. When I commemorate her excellence,
How lavish lovely dalliance free proceedes
From that raritie of perfection, O
How I'me ravisht; ravisht in thought as well,
As with the Act; which breeds no wonder though
High *Iove* transhapt him to *Amphitrio*
To taste the pleasure of *Alcmenas* bed;
Needs must such prodigall sweets mad thoughts of
Men; when power t'atract the Gods.

Mel. Impious Letchers. — *Aside.*

Mon. Silence, marke the event. — *Aside.*

Val. I that know none more worthy then my selfe
Of true regard and worth; would be resolv'd
What's he, that beares the valliant minde of man
Dares for his mightie sove raigne Mistris more

Then *Vrftius Valens.*

Pro. That dare I, I dare;
Fond that thou art to queſtion ſuch a toy,
Were thy power equall to thy daring pride,
Proculus dares doe more.

Men Nor thou, nor he,
Not *Valens* nor *Proculus* though you both,
Both durſt as much as he durſt cuckold *Iove*
Meneſter would tranſcend you.

Val. That our bloods decide.

All draw, expoſed to a Triple ſight round.

Pro. A Spirit of valour.

Men. Let it come.

Enter Meſſalina and Sauſellus above.

Meſſ. What killing objects, this preſents our eyes,
Our Favorites turn'd fighters muſt not be,
Deſcend *Sauſellus*, know the cauſe, wee'l follow.

Val. Stand all ſo firme, this Seale expreſſe my rage.

Pro. Mine this, } *wound each other.*
Men. This mine }

Enter Sauſellus.

Sauſ. Hold, hold, y're wounded all;
As you'l incurre our Emp'reſſe deepe diſpleaſure
Hold, and reſolve why thus you have expos'd
Your lives to danger.

Enter Empreſſe.

Meſſ. Whence proceeds this fray.

Men. From that concernes the credits of beſt men
Which

Which of us three in our affections priz'd
Your excellence moſt.

Meſſ. And was that the cauſe ?
Wee doe embrace and pretiouſly account
The vigour of your loves; ſo you no more
So full of ſpight, let proſecute your hate.
With the like hardy daring, twill not pleaſe.
We ſhould eſteeme your jarres rediculous
Iſſuing from brainelesse wit diſcern'd in others.
And as 'tis common to our emminent Sex,
Triumph inſtate, and glory in your falls;
Yet th'operation of your loves ſo workes,
That it ſcruze ours to judge the contrary.
Dry up your wounds with care; then come to court
Love ſhall entrance your ſoules; prepare for ſport.

Exit Meſſalina and Saufel.

Val. Ile ſtudy Art in love for recompence.

Pro. My love ſhall mount.

Men. Mine yeeld profuſe expence.

Exeunt Favorites.

Mon. Here was a ſtorme of miſchiefe ſoone blowne or'e,

Mel. 'Twas to preſerve them for a wicked life,
But ſince theſe complices are gon that are
Not worth leaſt memory; behold this booke,
Set my deare friend, and I will read to thee
Of that high Majeſtie puiſſant *Ens*,
From whom we have our being, life, and ſoule,
Which ſhould dull flintie inconſiderate man,
When with black deeds 'ith myrie bog of ſinne,
Beaſt like he wallowes; conſiders right,
Thinkes on his preſent ſtate (whence came and muſt)
Then on that terrible Thunderer that ſees,

His actions kick at heaven ; he then no more
Would dare t'offend his Maker, but with teares,
Lament his soules polution, which doth give
Matter, by which mens soules immortall live,
But through an unfrequented heavinesse
I am prevented.
Mon. Repose a while I'le reade.

Enter Empresse and Saufellus above.

Emp. Make us celestiall happy with thy newes,
Art thou sure 'tis he.
Sauf. 'Tis, 'tis *Montanus*,
Sure as I live, I tooke full view of him
Before and after the fight; then with drawne
Within yon grove of Oakes.
Emp. My hearts on fire
To clip him ; fly swift as thought *Saufellus*
Conduct him to our Paradice of joy,
If he escape desire then confound us,
We onely view'd him once, but then the time
Crost our desires ; blest opportunitie
That makes our happinesse a very heav'n
Wee'l build an Altar, and erect a shrine
That shall eternize thee for this ; wer't my brother
Resembled him we so intirely love,
Wee'd force him ravish pleasure if not kill
Be a *Semiramis* to sate our will.

Enter Saufellus.

Sauf. Haile to *Montanus*.
Mon. Sir the like to you.
Sauf. 'Tis th'Emp'resse pleasure you attend her (will.

Mon.

Mon. Know you the cause.
Sauf. Delay not with demands th'are frivilous
Will you along.
Mon. Your favour sir a while;
I'le but awake my friend, (So-ho) sleepy still,
Pray heaven this heavinesse imports no harme.
Exeunt.

Mel. How's this, my friend departed, I alone,
I know not what to thinke, 'tis very strange,
He thus unwak'd would leave me; sure he striv'd,
Yet I so fast, that he no doubt was loath
To breake my rest; 'tis so, and some chiefe cause
Which I might well dispence with drew him hence.
I'le to his fathers house, there certaine finde
Or heare of him. *Exit.*

Hoboyes. A Banquet, to it Montanus is usher'd in state by Saufellus and others, who placing him depart; Hoboyes cease, and solemne Musicke playes during his speech.

Mon. O Potent lust, thou that hast power to make
The valiant and the wise, coward, and foole,
I'me not so dull, but that I know thee now.
Now comprehend why Musicke breathes delight,
And why this banquet; why both presents themselves
To be my slaves; 'Tis to make me a slave
To lust; that deadly potion of the soule,
* Whose poyson quaft, kills body and the soule.

* *Ne Trauli quidem Montano equitis Romani, defensio recepta est, is modesta juventa, sed corpore insigni, accitus ultro noctemque, intra unam a Messallina perturbatus erat, paribus lasciviis ad cupidinem & fastidio. Tacit.*

Thats

That's the maine end of these harmonious straines,
These stirring meates, which unto me appeare,
Like those blew flames the damned taste in hell.

Enter Empereſſe by degrees, gazing at him.

Celestiall Angels guard me, now she comes,
And I so ill prepar'd, I, know not what,
A suddaine earthquake trembles natures frame,
Which like a falling Pine tree to and fro,
Vncertaine where to fall, it tottering stands.
She's most bewitching sweet, I feare, I feare,
She will ore come; now I begin to burne,
To scortch, like to the coales of *Etna*; strike
Me eternall winter with thy frosts; quench
Quench this hot combustion in my blood,
And if I needs must fall, O sacred powers
Benumbe my senses so, that I may taste
No sweetnesse in the Act, veeld no delight.

Emp. Thus long with admiration we have stood
To gaze on thy perfections, pretious shape
Why dost thou shake? why stare? as rapt in wonder
Why dumbe? or think'st thy happinesse a dreame
This kisse confirme thee ours; entrance thy soule
To stirre loves-panting appetite while thus
We clip thee in our Armes, embrace thee thus.

Mon. O —

Emp. That's loves Alarum, to bed, to bed,
To *Venus* field, there combate for loves treasure
Swimme in excesse of joy, there ravish pleasure.

Exeunt.

Enter

Enter Mela.

To thee faire fortune in divineſt ſenſe,
In wl om all excellence incluſive is,
To that high power, I invocate impore.
If pleas'd, direct where I may finde my friend,
Fil when, I fitly may aſſimulate
The reſtleſſe acquieſſence of my minde,
To the perpetuall motion of a wheele.
That by the force of water reſtleſſe turnes
The vigour of the torrent left unſtopt.
So the ſtrang abſence of my noble friend,
Suffers th'inſulting tortent of ſad griefe,
(Tyranicke-like upon the wheele of ſenſe)
To racke my reſtleſſe reſt, which I muſt beare;
'Tis vaine to ſtrive 'gainſt ſorrowes ſtreame to ſwim,
Man hath no power on griefe, griefe power on him;
What's he declines his viſage to the ground,
Is't not my friend? tis he, happily met.

Enter Montanus dejected in countenance.

Mon. Hell-cat no more, no more of thy imbrace,
Findeſt thou my body enemy to luſt
And yet agen attempts me.
Mel. How's this?
Mon. Keepe off inſatiate Empreſſe, I'le no more,
Poyſon of Monſters, the blood of *Neſſas*
Damme up thy *Curtian*-gulph-like appetite;
May furies fright thy whoriſh fortitude
Dancing *Lavolto's* in the very act
And dambe you.
Mel. Save him divine aſſiſtance,

For he's loſt ; miſtake not I'me thy friend
Mon. Tis ſo, and I am happily miſtooke,
Thy pardon worthy friend, it was my feare
Of further ill ; made me forget my ſelfe
Diſtracted ſenſe, as well it might, O ther's
A ſtrange deede paſt.
Mel. I fully comprehend,
By that diſtemper lately in your blood.
Twas muſicks ſweeteſt concord to my ſoule,
To heare with what a cold performance
Th'act was wreſted from you, happy prevention,
How like a doubtfull battle it hath made
The victory more joyfull ; which had elſe,
Had you repleniſht thoſe ſoule-killing ſweets,
No meanes for ſafetie then, but fall you muſt,
A prey to ſlaughter, or a ſlave to luſt.
But ſince with heavens prevention you are free,
Fly *Rome* ; the impious maladies ſhe breeds,
Experience tells, are hookes to catch at ſoules.
Therefore to be avoyded, ther's no truſt
To truſt to ſtay, where ſuch infection raignes.
VVho is at all times one ; in that right way
Man ought to be, being circumvolv'd mong thoſe,
That by the Plummets of licentious will
Meaſure their vertues ; 'tis impoſſible.
The ſcholler, He, in whom there doth conſiſt
Honeſt conditions, and within whoſe heart
Ther's many vertues make their reſidence,
Though with night watchings at his ſtudy ſite,
Waſting his vitall ſpirits (not unlike
His burning Tapor) to illuminate
Others the way that leads to the direct,
From ſuperficiall to eſſentiall joy,
Even he, ill company corrupts, directs

To the indirect; so that some one vice
Robs him of all his vertue: The Souldier
That magnanimious resolution,
He that leaves nothing unattempted
May tend to the honour of his countrey,
Ill company poysons with selfe conceit,
Cankers with envie; till on the racke of
Haute ambition stretcht, like stubble set
On fire he prove a flame.
And therefore to prevent us, gainst all ill 'gainst
Wisedome commands our absence, truly knowes,
Man at the best, his power to doe is little
His state obnoxious, at the best most brittle. (way
Mon. Your counsell points my actions their true
To immortalitie, forewarnes to flye,
The dire event of future Tragedy
Which as the flame, the fire of force must follow
By th'Emp'resse bloudy project; that Monster
In nature, in this the Emperours absence,
Mounts on the highest Spyre of infamy,
Resolves to joyne in *Hymeneall* bands
With *Cajus* which *Silius* quaint vallanie,
To put in speedy practise, he last night
Ariv'd at Court.
Mel. There let their impudence,
For glassie glories of Monorcall state
Ingender sinne with sinne, flatter their hopes,
While our soules fixt on contemplation
Make for the Ile of *Corce*, (come my deare
Friend there on the *Tyrhen* shore wee'l practise
Mans sole perfection to be heavenly wise.

Exeunt.

ACT

ACT. 4. SCENE. 1.

Enter Empresse, Silius, Virgilianus, Calphurnianus, Valens, Proculus, Menester and Sausellus with attendants.

Sil. YOur Excellence that too, too gloriously
Resembles your rare Sex; succeeding times
Shall to the end of time, gaze and admire,
Wonder at your high prudence, which to the
Combination of our Nuptialls, hath charm'd
* Dull *Casar* to a free consent, behold;
Shewes the confirmation of the marriage.
There you whose loves doe ever bind me yours
May view my fortunes like a valley rise
Above those hills that will admit no clouds,
There's a full grant wherein you may discerne
My glories in this admirable lemme.
Val. 'Tis a fit bound unto your boundlesse glory.
Men. Not *Ninus*,
Was ere more dull, more easily entrap
Then Romes rediculous Em'prour *Claudius*.
Vir. Rediculous indeede here 'tis comfirm'd.
Emp. Reade it *Virgilianus*.
Vir. The mariage of our Emp'resse with *Cajus*
* *Silius* we fairely like; and to that end, *Reade.*

* *Nihil compositum miraculi causa. Tacit.*
* *Nam illud omnem fidem excesserit, quod nuptias quas Messallina cum adultero Silio fecerat, tabellas dotis & ipse consignaverit: inductus, quasi de industria simularentur, ad avertendum transferendumque periculum imminere ipsi per quaedam ostenta portenderetur. Sueton.*

(For

(For approbation of our Copious Grant)
With our imperiall signet willingly
Have seal'd this assurance, granting a Dower
Out of our Treasurie to be exhaust,
And of our royall pleasure to be given
With her our onely happinesse on earth.
By whose perswasions we are confident
The said Nuptialls, to be but colourably,
Onely of purpose t'avert the danger
Of certaine prodigies, aym'd at our losse
Of life and Empire.

Calp. This credulitie in *Cæsar*, was by
Her highnesse excellently mannag'd.

Sauf. Sure
Ioves high love to his lov'd *Ganymed*
Descends in triumph on the Noble *Silius*.

Val. Else, how should the meanes to his high ayre,
Free from the plots of blood thus fairely greet
Without least flaw in safetie.

Pro. True, true, nor
Can it enter in my thoughts to thinke,
What obstacle should barre his excellence
From writing Emp'rour.

Men. None, not the least let;
The people that are the Nerves of Empire
All for the vertues of your noble Syre,
Dearely affect you; boldly rely on't
At publication of this copious grant
They'l adde all majestie to your high fame.

Sauf. Their love to you and feare of prodigies
Pretended for to dimme dull *Cesars* glory
Will worke constraint.

Val. Refresh to memory
The Acts of blood that raign'd in *Stylla's* dayes.

 That

Emp. Busie their braines, and put them stirra minde
That the blacke thoughts of *Cataline* survive
For this prodigious Age to perpetrate.
Calp. Besides the Auspices, 'mong whom this grant
Was sign'd, they by the Entrailes of their beasts
Firmely affirme (past contradiction)
Your raigne to be most safe and popular.
Vir. Which with the rest are piercing motives, that
Of necessitie (as food and rayment
To the bodies health) will force the people
Constant; they in their love and feare must make
Your more then royall spirit most endear'd
That state best rules, rules to be lov'd and fear'd
Sil. Noble *Romans*, deare country men and friends
These solid certainties you here pronounce
In my behalfe, (which argues your firme friendship,
The vengefull Gods must in their justice grant.
Make me the Minister of Fate, dig up
The dignities of *Cæsars* Race, and in
The stead, plant monumentall ruine, make
The name wretched draw dishonour'd breath,
All the dire torments Furies can invent,
Were all too little for my Fathers losse,
That memorable he, he that hath stood
The fiery fervour of so many fights,
Came bravely off, and sav'd this Empire.
Gave unto *Cæsar Rome* and servile senate
Gave all their strength and being, and for all
(Growne too too great examples for the times,)
Plots were devis'd in recompence to kill,
And that their machivillian darkenesse, he
No sooner sented, but in open senate

Scorching

Scorning *Tiberius*, and deaths base censure
Expos'd his life a sacrifice to valour.
And for that fact, upon the blood and name,
That caus'd so brave and famous an example
For all free spirits, Ile be reveng'd after
No common sort.

Val. Brave *Silius* go on, and
Prosper, and command me ever
And all.

Sil. The thankes 'mong Princes of ignoble braine
That shines like rotten wood, serves pettie use,
The mind of *Silius* much much more then scornes,
The grave *Virgil dixus*, during the
Life of *Silius* shall ne'r speake but with the
Voice of *Consuls*; he, *Calphurnianus*
Vestius Valens, *Proculus*, *Menester*,
And *Saufellus Trogus*, to all renowne
Commend and wealth of Provinces shall flow,
T'expresse the gratitude of *Silius*, and
Though last nam'd, yet your bright excellence (the
Which for gratitude ever remembred)
Best in esteeme and first; not unlike, to
That rare Iem reserved last to view for
Worth and glory, to you all the delight
This world of man affords I freely give.

Emp. Thy temper melts me my magnanimous Mate.

Sil. The Rites of *Hymen*, with next morrowes Sun
Shall apt my blood unto the perfect height
Of pleasure, love and emminence, lead on.
Pompey nor Cæsar, could endure a Mate,
Nor Silius Claudius in superiour state.

Exeunt omnes.

Enter Narcissus, Pallas, Calistus.

Nar. Emp'rour of empie braines, z'heart I could curse,
His soule to th'depth of *Barathrum* O——
Pal. Who but *Claudius*, unworthy of Empire,
Drunke with the dreggs of overlight beleefe
Would be so grostely gul'd.
Cal. Scar'd with the Bugges
Of Babies.
Nar. A whoores invention, a drab
Of state, a cloth of Silver slut, the tricks
Of a tempting Tissue Trull, to push his
Hornes upon the Pikes of ruine, where he
Should rot; rot; wer't not to serve our owne ends,
Maintaine that habit of perfection sure,
Which till this sudaine unexpected change
Like Paste has workt him to what mould we pleas'd.
Pal. And must doe still, or certainly we perish.
Cal. 'Tis the prime pollicie, the heart of state,
Which if with vigilance we not pursue,
* We lose, and in that losse lost for ever.
Silius growes popular, and the people
As 'tis their nature, ever covet change,
They are as easie to be fil'd with errours,
As for a lust-stung strumpet to take up
To her dishonor: therefore as Saylers,
That have for guide the South and North, sometimes
To traverse, and to crosse their way, and yet
Not lose their guide; so in the deepe affaires
Of such high consequence of state (as now
The time concerns) we must for guide, detaine

* *Subibat sine dubio metus, reputantes hebetem Claudium & uxore ejus devinctum. Tacit.*

The

* The knowledge how to peirce the ends of those
We most maligne.

Pal. Thereby indeede man rarely
Rests deceived, which for to put in speedy
Practise, and stop the marriage, you and I
My Lord (under the vaile of friendship) will
To *Rome*; perswade the Empr'esse *Cæsar* is
Himselfe; perceives that all her plots to his
Destruction tends; the losse of Empire and
Th'abuse of 'his bed, dissuaded her from the
Love of *Silius*, which (in the refusall)
Blood and fire must quench.

Nar. This put home
With low submission, making her beleeve
By cringes, creepings, and a *Synons* face,
That all our care is onely for her good,
May worke perswasion.

Cal. But not in her.
There is no trust to such uncertaintie,
T'were deadly *Stibium* to our vitall blood,
Like that dire poyson thats resistative
'Gainst the most wholesome Antidotes of life.
Weake mindes of men they are, fit to be fool'd,
Slighted, add scorn'd, whose dull ignorance
Knowes not that women in their height of ill,
Who barres them their delight, delight to kill.
What will *Valeria*, *Messallina*, the
Emp'resse then; hinke you she will be slow,
Whose hot Alarums in the very Act
Within the circuit of a day and night
Indur'd the test of five and twentie, came

* *Agitavere; num Messallina secretis minis depellerent amata Silij, cuncta alia dissimulantes deinde metu, ne ad perniciem ultro traherentur desistunt. Tacit.*

Off unwearied: A deede to quake the hearts
Of vertuous Dames, thinke you she will be bar'd
Diswaded from the love of *Silius*, no,
We cannot therefore (knowing that credit and
Authority is farre more safely for
To be maintain'd with circumspect, then with
Rash counsell) cannot I say be too too
Wary, least by any notice taken
She take least knowledge of our discontent,
Whose rugged thoughts unseene, must be smooth'd ore
And with a pleasing vaile, appeare in shew
To like, and give full approbation
Of the approbrious marriage, so to
Secure us from suspect and perill,
Vndoubted death.

Nor. I fully apprehend,
That so *Romes* Syren in the height of pride,
Silius and all the factious Complices
Through wicked wedlocks jollitie made drunke
Drunke with the dregges of blinde securitie.
Then, then my pyoning pollicies aloft
(Of which my braine deteines the Theorick)
Shall apt a Time for vengeance unwithstood
The thirst of their Ambition quenche in blood.
Till when sleepe on, sleepe on ye fooles of fate,
" Plots best encounter plots, free from suspect,
" Fly like the bolts of jove, firme in effect. *Exeunt.*

Cornets, Enter Empereſſe and Silius crown'd attended in state by the Auſpices and their faction paſſing over the ſtage to the Temple, Lepida with her haire diſhivelled wringing her hands meets them, they goe off ſhee ſpeakes.

Lep. Bleſt be that ſacred power which reſtor'd

My

My senses lost, and in that perfect being
Gives me the noble patience for to see,
And suffers not mine eye-balls to drop out
At sight of this my daughters impudence,
Shame that attends this wicked Nuptiall Rites
Now in the name of goodnesse, what meanes this

Enter Valens, Proculus, Menester and Saufellus.

Whispering? what new mischiefe lies hatching
In yonder bloudy villaines busie braine?
In the discovery, counterfeit sleepe,
And madnesse be my Moske.

Sauf. At the *Bachanalian* feast which now
Drawes nigh, then a rich stirring Maske will best
Expresse it selfe in greatest glory; the
Tunes for song I'le take that charge on me.

Val. For changes in each dance my braine shall worke.

Sauf. What sayes *Menester*, he that has borne the
Prize; leapt Madam *Venus* in her height of pride
For gratefull action and sweet Poesie.

Val. Now,
Does he claw like a decay'd Tradesman, when
To maintaine the wagging of his chappes
His wives Veneriall Firk-in must to Sale.

Men. Why did you ne're heare of a fellow, that
By the scratching of his nimble pate,
Workt your best pleasing project for a maske,
Was well rewarded for't, when such as you
For paines in song and dances laught to scorne
Poore simple sots, their payment was the horne.

Pro. O nimble Satyricall veine.

Men. That's slow enough and dull at this time.

Sauf. What thinke you
Of a wooden *Cupid* brought in, in
An antick amble making it wag like
The Apish head of a *French* Fidler, when he
Firkes with his Fingers.
Val. 'Twill never take
Vnlesse you bring in the dapper dancer,
With his la ta tat a teero tat a tant
Ta ra rat a ta too rant tat a ta teero tat a too,
Flinging away his legges, and skrewing his face
Into the fury of a thousand fooles.
Whose this? Mad-madam *Lepida* a sleepe.
Sauf. Tis well; else shee'd raile faster then any
Citie Puppet.
Pro. That's a horrid hearing.
Sauf. O a hell, none like it, let Scorpios itch
Raigne in her middle spheare, phy how shee'l
Play the divell with Cuckold simplicitie
Her husband for want of performance, it
Passeth all admiration, and that with
No little wonder, yet demand the Act,
And then you shall have my nice o'recurious dame,
Vpon the Tiptoes of her apish pride,
Protest, with O no---I will not wrong my
Husband for earths treasure, stand upon her
Honesty, then smile, change in a moment,
And then wantonize, mop, mew, bite lip and
Wriggle with the bumbe to put a man in minde;
Then touch, shee'l gripe, and clip with a kisse,
Melt into all the formes of Venery
Thought can devise, and thet's her honesty.
Men. O petulant purenesse of defiled pitch,
But you forget what actors are prepar'd
In readinesse for practise gainst the Masque,

Sauf.

Sauf. The vestall Virgins from the Temple hail'd
They shall supply that want 'tis so decreed
By th' Empresse strict command.

Lep. O horrible. *Aside.*

Sauf. All from the age of ten, to twentie five
Must suffer Rape, and shall, stood hell in sight.

Val. Spoake like thy selfe my metropolitan
Cut throate of chastitie.

Sauf 'Twill be excellent,
Rare, I fat with laughter at the rich conceite,
Wee'l play at Tennis with their maidenheads,
Fiftie at a breakfast, shall not give me
Content.

Lep. I say, vertues a Cypher in
The hearts of great ones, and stands for nothing,
What sayes your most approved judgements, your
Single sole conceits I am sure will stand
For bawdy Comedies, and ribald jests.
Insinuate thou and so wax knavish wise,
Thou a stampt villaine, learne to temporise,
Plot thou, and set friends hourely at debate,
Cling to the surer side, the weaker hate,
Turne bawd at midnight, Pander to a Whore
While lust in 'ith act (ye knaves) looke to the doore.
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha. *Exit.*

Sauf. Laughs thou mad mawde:
Goe with a burning mischiefe, Z'heart I could cut
Her throate, but something in her lookes there is
That shakes me, what a gen.

Enter Lepida.

Lep. Be thou,
One that knowes how to mix with perilous Arts.

The deadly poyson with the amorous dart,
Drunk with conceite, that greatnesse beares the sway,
Safely to act what villany it may.
Godge godden I'le come agen anon. *Exit.*

Sauf. But wee'l prevent you, come Lords to Court,
She shall be silenc'd or her tongue cut out.
Exeunt.

Lep. Gon, O happy blesst blest prevention
That to mine eares unlockt the horrid sound
The blacke intention of so foule a rape,
A hundred vestall virgins to be whor'd,
First let the world dissolve and dispate;
To its first *Chaos*; O thou all-seeing power
Prostrate on bended knees, I here implore,
Beg at thy mightie hands t'inspire my soule,
Make me the substitute and holy meanes,
The sweet prevention of so horrid a
Fact; O heaven, tis granted, thankes Majestie
Divine; worke on my minde; thought happily
Thought upon; a spacious vault I have, which
Neare adjoynes unto the Vestalls Temple;
Thither this night by a back secret way
I'le draw the holy maides (none will suspect
Because all deeme me mad) there by this hand
Succour, releefe, and safetie shall attend
Your noble soules; chaste maides live long and blest,
" Free from the bondage of blacke mischieffes hands,
" To vertuous Actions, heaven propitious stands.

ACT.

ACT. 5. SCENE. 1.

Enter Emperour, Narcissus, Pallas, Calistus.

Emp. ARe we not *Cæsar?*
Is not *Romes* Empire servile unto us?
You mad me with your newes.
Nar. Mad a Dog, a
Cat, a Rat, y'are to tame, want spirit
To be mad, I am mad, mad to the depth
Of madnesse; O I could teare my haire, to
See you thus, thus senseless of your wrongs, but
Doe, doe; be the grand Cuckold of this universe,
Let *Cajus Silius* raigne *Romes* Emp'rour.
Pal. Lov'd of the people.
Cal. Honour'd of the *Senate*
Nar. Hurrid in triumph through the streets of (*Rome*
Pal. In *Cæsars* Chariot glistring like the Sunne,
Cal. While *Cæsar*, unlike *Cæsar* calmely suffers.
Nar. Out of his Empire finely to be work't,
Finely, betwixt the two hot Palmes of lust.
Pal. Abus'd (forsooth) for feare of Prodigies.
Nar. That, that, O infinite shame in stately
Majestie, to make your selfe a never
Dying scoffe for ages yet unknowne
To point at you, for the most famous Cuckold.
Cal. The renowned Cuckold.
Pal. The high and mightie Cuckold.
Nar. Cuckold by five and twentie, all in the
Short space of a day and night, O infinite
Bawdy villany.

Emp. Damnation seize her,
I will heare no more; misery of miseries,
Impatience crampes my vitall veines, that swell
With fiery boyling rage, O I am a sumpe
Of true vexation, tortur'd with torments
Worse then those in hell, in hell, very hell's
This body sure is not substantiall, no
I am all ayre, piere'd through and through with
stormes,
Incessant stormes, that strike a terrour to
My panting soule, misery of mariage,
Horn'd, and abus'd by every vassaile Groome
Vessells of basenesse, they shall buy it deare
The high Sea of their daring pride must downe
All topsie turvie to confusion turne
I will uncharme and never more be fool'd
Slave to those wonder darting eyes that strike
Amazement through the world, those bewitching
Lampes her eyes, fed with the oyle of whorish
Fortitude, (that like the *Centaure's* blood)
Rivets the poyson of fell furies rage
Into my blood and braine, those false false eyes,
Shall never more intice, because that I
Will never see them more, they shall put out
Their glory for a grave, here forgot
Scorn'd, and contemn'd of *Caesar*, lye and rot.

Nar. Now are you *Caesar*.

Pal. What you ought you are.

Cal. The high and mightie Roman Emperour.

Emp. But am I so indeede (for I'me amaz'd
At my dull follies past) is't not too late
To call backe errours darknesse. O tell me
Narcissus, is not *Silius* Emperour.
Vsurpes he not that name past reach to quell.

Nar. Confeare on me that absolute command,
Which *Geta* Captaine of your guard now holds
Over your souldiers here at *Hostia*,
And ere the next Sun ler his circular course
The daring pride of all the faction,
Cesar shall sit in senate, and their doome.
Emp. Sweetest revenge, honour'd *Narcissus* draw
Out the souldiers at thy free dispose
Here's thy command, *Geta* we doe mistrust
Gives him a Ring.
Thee onely trust, accelerate revenge,
That I may ebbe the high swolne tide of wrongs,
Which beyond limmits teares my restlesse braine,
Knits and then teares with infinite unrests
If there be Hell, the divell and damnation
'Tis mans delight in woman, insatiate
Woman; that will doe with the divell, O
'Tis a fearefull thing to be a Cuckold,
Rowl'd up in wrinkles of foole patience,
We heare they have a Masque, but rather, then
Any of the lustfull ronte, make their escape
Fire me the Palace, burne 'em in that Masque,
It will be brave to see 'em dance in fire,
Skip letch'rous Antickes in a boyling flame,
That thus with raging passion, boyling, flames
My most distracted braine; tortures no lesse,
Then if on *Caucasus* we were expos'd,
A never dying prey to the Eagles beake.
Such is the misery of marriage, where
The besotted husband most affects, there

* *Trepidabatur nihilominus a Cæsare, quippe Geta prætorij præfectus haud satis fidebat, ad honesta seu prava juxta levi, &c. Tacit.*

To

To be most abus'd, Cuckold, Cuckold, Cuckold, O.

Exit

Nar. After *Calistus*, t'appease his fury.

Exit Calistus.

My Lord, I'le post to *Rome*, the people groane
Beneath the Emp'rsse weight; tis mischievous
* The bloody massacre of those *Roman* dames
Murder'd for hate to lust, affords plentie
Of friends, to force the Citie gates open
To our free entrance.

Pal. In signe whereof,
From the high top, the temple of god Mars
Let a bright burning Torch i'th'dead of night
Waft our approach.

Nar. Like *Synons* unto *Troy*;
Talke trifles time.

Pal. Farewell my noble Lord. *Exit.Pa.*

Nar. Till next we meete farewell, it is decreed
I'th height of pride murder and lust must bleed.

Exit.Nar.

Enter Lepida and Vibidea, meeting each other.

Lep. Now good *Vibidia*, thou vertuous Matron
Of *Romes* Vestall maides, say, are they all safe,
Can they endure the vault, that wretched shift
This wretched Age inforces,

Vib. Best, best Lady,
Thou Angell mother, of a Fiend-like child,
All earthly similies are too too base
To expresse thy admirable vertues,

* *Multa mortes jussu Messalinæ patratæ. Tacit.*

By you *Romes* Vestall Virgins all are safe,
Onely by you preserv'd and kept from rape
From being hurrid in sad silence, unto
The gate *Colina*, there in a deepe pit
To be put into, there buried alive,
From that dire death which was at first ordain'd
For unchaste vestalls; by thee chaste vestalls
Live all preserv'd, to them their darkesome vault
Is farre more glorious then the courts of Kings,
For which upon my knees in blessed time,
Wonder of women let me kisse thy feete.

Kneeles.

Lep. What meanes *Vibidia*?
Vib To reverence your steps,
The earth, the very ground whereon you tread,
For that's made holy by your sacred steps.
Lep Not unto me *Vibidia* but to heaven,
To that lets kneele, to that omnipotence
Which made this earth, lets both with holy zeale

Both kneele.

Salute our mother earth in ardent love,

Kisse the earth.

To heavens great Master.

A Noyse within of Follow follow, follow.

Vib. Now the good Gods preserve us.
Lep. Fly to the vault, I feare we are betrayd.

Exeunt.

Enter Saufellus, Hem and Stitch with Lights.

Sauf. Search, search about,

My *Genius* whisper'd in mine eares last night
The vestall lodged within this mad Mawdes house
Shee dies for't, while the chaste puppets we will
Drag to court, there ravish and there kill,
'I will prove an excellent closing to the Masque.
Hem. How if we finde them not (my Lord) (here
Sauf. Finde or finde not, for that I'me sure th'are
We'l fire the house and flame it into Ayre.
Hem. The ground shakes, I sinke,
Thunder and lightning, Earth gapes and swallowes the three murders by degrees.
Zownes *Hems* hem'd to the earth
I cannot stirre.
St. Nor I I sinke, *Stitch* sinkes
Had we our names for this, a vengeance of
All false *Stitches*, they have stitch't me, O horror.
Sauf. How's this.
Hem. Hell and confusion } Sinke both.
St. Divells and Furies }
Sauf. Horror of darkenesse, what dread sight is this
What black Red-raw-eyd witch hath charm'd this ground.
Sink'st thou my limbes supporter; must I yeeld,
Dost thou then faint proud flesh, mount mount my blood,
And like *Enceladus* out dare thy fate,
O that my wish were suited to my will
Now would I cuckold all the world, leave not
A man unhorn'd, a maid unrap't, beget
A brood of *Centaure's* to supply, and worke
The worlds confusion; ha more horror yet,

Thunder. Enter Angell, three murdered Dames with revenge threatning.

Why silly dames, I confesse your murders,
But to repent the fact, know that my heart.
Is like the Corsick Rock, more hard; farre more
Vnpassable then *Chymera* mount, whats
That in white there, what so e're it be; the
Majesty it beares, trembles my sinewes,
O how it shakes me; came Furies clad in
Flames, not all hells tortures, th'affrights & horrours
Equalls the thousand part the paines I feele
Through sight of that, that flaming Christall, sinke
Me O--earth; *Pindus* and *Ossa* cover
Me with Snow, hide me *Cimerian* darkenesse
Let me not see it, my Eye sight failes
Ingeniosi sumus ad falendum nosmet ipsos,
Farewell *Romes* Emp'resse

Shot with a Tunderbolt.

To all ambitious vermine,
Puncks, Pimpes, and Panders, Whores and Bawdes farewell.
Confound the world, the worst of death is hell.

Sinks.

Enter Salpitius with a Guard.

Sul. Make way there for shame; cleare the staires,
You of the guard, force all intruders backe,
1. *Gua.* Backe, backe, backe there, keepe backe,
2. *Gua.* For shame make hast, way for my Lords the *Senate*.
Sul. Burne beards and faces, burne em in the face
That offer to presse in,

Cornets sound a Flourish, Enter Senate who placed by Sulpitius, *Cornets cease, and the Antique Maske consisting of eight Bachinalians enter guirt with Vine leaves, and shap't in the middle with Tunne Vessells, each bearing a Cup in their hands, who during the first straine of Musick played foure times over, enter by two at a time, at the Tunes end, make stand; draw wine and carouse, then dance all: The Antimasque gone off: and solemne Musicke playing:* Messallina *and* Silius *gloriously crown'd in an Arch-glitering Cloud aloft, Court each other.*

Sil. Abstract of rare perfection my *Iuno*,
Glorious Emp'resse all admiration.
Emp. Excellent *Silius* all perfection.
Sil. Amazing rarity, beauties treasure.
Emp. Natures wonder, my delight my pleasure.
Sil. Let me suck Nectar, kisse, kisse, O kisse me.
Emp. Soule to my lips, embrace, hug, hug me.
Sil. Leap heart.
Emp. Mount blood.
Sil. Thus rellish all my blisse.
Emp. Agen the pressure of that melting kisse.
Sil. Descend my *Venus* all compos'd of love.
Emp. Lockt in thy Armes my Mars.
Sil. Downe, downe we come
Like glistring *Phœbus* mounted in his Car,
When in the height of the celestiall signes
He sayles along the Circuit of the Skie.

While they descend, Valens, Proculus, and Menester with three Curtezans in the habit of Queenes with Coronets of state meete them beneath, during their silent congratulation, Narcissus *enters a'oft with a Torch and speakes.*

Nar.

Ner. Blacke is the night; a Canopie of clouds,
Hides the bright Silver spangles of the skie,
All is secure, revenge proportion keepes
To my full wish; no thought of blood and death
Writes on the Index of blacke deeds at Court
The least suspect; mad lust and wine, revells
And pleasures, muffle their understanding.
O Lust, lust, lust, wer't thou not what thou art,
A thicke blacke cloud onely compos'd of ill
For to tempt judgement, hadst thou the rellish
Of sweet good, as thou art badly bitter,
Thee above all the Gods I would adore,
Thee, thee adore, that unresisted thus,
Snares the besotted Faction to their fall.
Loade them with *Lethe* still, while thus I wafe
Revenge from *Hostia*; like the sad flames
Of *Ilion* burne, burne bright Torch; let thy faire view
Tune to the dance of death, the amorous
Measures of full vengeance; blaze prodigie,
When the bad bleed give me that Tragedy. *Exit.*

Leaves the Torch burning.

Emp. Musicke, distill new sweetnesse, vary thy
Nectar Notes, while *Loves* bright eyes, court lips to
The height of dalliance, each sacrifice a kisse,
To all th'inchantments of loves luscious blisse.

All. O liquid life of live. *All kisse.*

Sil. Here's a full bole, a health to the height of pleasure. *Kisse.*

Emp. Brave health agen, another, and a third.

Val. That deepe carouse, makes *Vellius Valens* see:

Sil. See, what dost see?

Val. In my mindes eye me thinks,
A moving Army comming from *Hostia*.

Sil. O likelyhood, an Army from *Claudius.*
Emp. Senseleſſe *Cornuto,* he's to confident,
He ha's too great affiance in my love.
Pro. His Cornucopia skull feares prodigies,
Men. Alas, his hornes fork'd like an aged Oake,
Are growne too great, to huge to enter *Rome.*
Val. O mightie hornes.
Pro. O monſtrous Majeſtie.
Sil. Scoffe of glory.
Emp. My ſcorne,
Come, come lets dance, Muſicke proceed,
Claudius my hate ſhall with the next ſun bleed.

The dance ended, Alarum within.

Enter Sulpitius his ſword drawne.

Sulp. Haſt, haſt to ſave your ſelves, we are betrayd,
The armed Troopes of *Cæſar* enter *Rome,*
Fly or their brandiſht ſteele will guirt the Court.
Paſt all eſcape.
Emp. Deafe, deafe me O thuunder,
Betrayd, O blacke afright, fly *Silius* flie.

Exeunt Senate and Curtezans.

Sil. What to out live my Fate, no, you of
The Senate fly, fly all, ſtand not amaz'd, my
mightie Miſtris, endanger not your ſelfe,
Excellent Empreſſe, *Sulpitius* be your guard.

Exeunt Empr. and Sulpitius.

But why you ſad copartners in my fall,
Why ſtand you thus plung'd in the panting depth
Of deepe amaze, collect your ſpirits and
Purſue your ſafetie.
Val. What? fly?
And leave you here a firſt with this hand

I'le

I'le teare my bowells out, and sacrifice
My heart's last leave to life.
Pro. To flye from you,
O 'twere the loathsom'st scumme coward e're lapt:
Men. Blacke blots of infamy to endlesse fame
Wu'd write our Epitaphs, if basely flye.
Where were the noble mindes of *Brutus* then,
Brave *Cassius*, and *Tytinnius* hate to life,
Sil. Our deaths shall be more glorious, far lesse ill;
Yet will we die, arm'd with a world of valour.
Not like those desperate fooles, which by their
Owne swords fall; we are too deepe in lust, to
Sucke such backe damnation, that were horrid.
The soule, the all that is the best in man,
Tells of two opposites, life and death in death.
True sorrow for lifes death misselead in life,
That's perfect valour, makes men bravely die
That liv'd not so, when the selfe violent death
Is but a bastard volour.

Enter with weapons drawne, Emperour Claudius, Narcissus, Calistus, with souldiers.

Emp. Now you luxurious traytor, Emperour
Silius; your highnesse gates at length are forc'd
To bow; wher's your top gallant strumpet, that
Strumpet, witch, hell-Cat; most insatiate whore
That ever cleav'd to the loynes of Letchers.
Tell me ye impious villens, Traytrous slaves,
That I may execute my burning hate,
And send ye swimming in her blood to hell.
Sil. *Claudius*, let it suffice, she is not here,
Spit all thy venome; be it a Sea of
Poyson let it fall, here's none will shrinke; our
Bloods are all too much enobled, into
The eminent temper of true Monarches.

To dread respectlesse death.

Val. None here but scornes
To plead with humble basenesse, low submission
For miserable mercy.

Pro. None here complaines upon the enticements
Of your Emp'resse, that were too basely vile.

Men. We win no glory in our deaths by that,
Our selves against our selves give guilty,
Onely beg mercy from the Gods.

Sil. Of you our quicke dispatch, tarte lifes ex-(change
For a delicious death; which if I thought
Should feede upon delay, by all thats sacred
Thus weaponlesse, we all would force
And cut our way to death through some of you.

Emp. I fret with sufferance, upon 'em souldiers:

Souldiers wound them.

Sil. O ravishing content.

Val. Fulnesse of joy,
My lustfull bloud flowes from me, man's ne're blest,
Till freed by death, lockt from the worlds unrest. Dies

Pro. Man is to man a monster hearted stone,
With heaven ther's mercy, but with man ther's none.

Dies.

Men. This Tragick end is the most welcome part
I ever grac'd with action; 'tis the best,
O homo fragilis, fœlix voluptates abeuntes.
Man is an Actor, and the world the Stage.
Where some do laugh, some weepe, some sing, some (rage,
All in their Parts, during the Scene of breath
Act follies, scourg'd by the Tragedian death.
My Sun is set in blood; fly soule and catch
"At a more glorious being, farewell breath,
"Man's never in the way to joy till death. *Dies.*

Sil. Why like a worme crawling twixt life & death

Am

Am I thus for c'd; I must, I will not die
So like a beast, the lofty Cedar and the aged Oake,
Cuft with incessant stormes shall represent
The fall of *Silius*; what? wil't not do? no?
Shall my death then prevaile above my minde,
O sad condition, misery of life.
Expence of bloud faints me, and yet I stand,
Stagger in spight of death; lifes threads uncut,
What meanes this Riddle? are the Fates asleepe?
So drunke at sight of this sad spectacle,
I must awake their waking; I'me abus'd,
Where art thou, thou invisible threefe; leane
Rogue I dare thee to this combite, why slave,
Dog, coward, dastard Death, no no; why then
O kind best loving death; if valiant, if
Thou be that sole conquerour of Kings time
Speakes thee for? prethee, but for one bout,
I'le not resist, scarse able to stand; open
Breasted, take all advantage, disjoynt the
Chaine of inauspicious *stars*, fettering
My over wearied flesh with life, one thrust
Put home will end me.

Emp. Sinke him *Evodius*.

Sil. Thrust home and sure,
Why so; desire now followes my bloud,
Farewell world picture of painted folly,
Frame of woe; paltry life, I gladly shake thee off.

Enter Syllana running.

Syll. Hold, hold, for pitty hold.

Sil. It is too late.
Too late *Syllana* my most vertuous wife.

Syll. O my deare husband, flint hearted *Cæsar*,
Was not this husband wrought by the *Circean*
Charmes of thy she divell; she, she hath bin,

The fatall Engine of my husbands sinne,
She from my heart hath torne away this pearle
More pretious then the world, O my deare love,
I doe beseech thee to beare up in death,
Shoot thy pale lookes through my afflicted soule,
Whose sighes and teares & prayers knit up in groanes
Ascend yon starry globe unto the Gods,
The good good Gods to pardon thee my love.
Sil. Like a spent Taper onely for a flash,
I doe recover to embrace thee sweet:
Forgive me injur'd excellence; constant wife,
Take from my lippes (deare heart) a parting kisse
Cold as the dead mans Skull; nay weepe not sweet
There is divinity in that weeping eye,
Prayer on thy lip, and holinesse in thy heart;
The Divells cannot say I flatter thee,
Nor this abusive, scorneful, dull darke Age,
Taxe me to say it never, never can,
Not out of all the Catalogue of women,
Pick such a *Phœnix* Saint forth as thy selfe.
In thee, bright heavens *majesticke* eminence,
Lives my supporting prop against all ill
To take me up to mercy. *Dies.*
Syl. Stay, O stay,
And take me with thee up to mercies seate,
For when we are there, I know, we shall not
Part thus; O he is gone; the strings of life
Are crackt; I'le not outlive thee, no; thy losse
Most noble husband, wafts my soule the way
To her eternall rest, breake heart, swell griefe,
And mount me to my love; I neede not I,
The burning coales of *Portia*, *Lucrece* knife,
One kisse wilt do't, thus ends *Syllana*'s life. *Dies.*
Enter.

Enter Pallas, with Virgilianus, Calphurnianus and Sulpitius Prisoners.

Pall. Live royall Emp'rour long and happy live,
To adde to your revenge behold I bring
The approbrious Faction unto *Silius*.
Emp. More blood unto this banquet welcome, what
Virgilianus so grave a Senator
So trech'rous, serv'd you as Bawdes to sooth the
Mindes of Letchers, *Calphurnianus* and
Sulpitius too: off with their heads, away
With them, be suddaine, the tunne of vengeance in
Now begins to stoope broach: with the blood of
These; vaine inconsiderate fooles.
Nar. My Lord,
The Core of lust still lives, time was *Rome* brag'd
Of these dead corpes for the most vertuous youths
It e're brought forth, till your leud Empresse
Poyson'd their bloods with her bewitching lust.
Emp. Where is that wretch?
Pal. Prisoner, my Lord, safe in *Lucullus's* garden
Emp. Remove these bodies, her bloods the period
To my full revenge.

Enter Vibidia

Vib. Mercy great Emp'rour, mercy for the love
You beare unto your hopefull royall issue,
Lovely *Britanicus*, sweet *Octavia*,
And for that admiration of her sex.
Their mothers mother vertuous *Lepida*
She that hath sav'd a hundred virgins from
The racke of rape, for that true peircing motive
Mightie Lord; O be in your great mercy
Pleas'd; to give your Emp'resse audience.
Emp. My Emp'resse,
She is no more my Emp'resse, her blacke life
Lost in lust, hath chang'd that name into an

Ethiops

Æthiops blacknesse, yet for those Infants sake
For *Lepida*, and for the love we beare
Your holy order we will heare her speake,
Narcissus, against to morrow let her
Have warning to appeare in Senate.

Exeunt omnes.

Nar. I but such warning as she shall nere come there.

Manet Narcissus.

I'le give no trust to those her whorish eyes.
* She will bewitch thee *Cesar*, mollifie
Thy flint heart; if they e're peece agen
Off goes my head; I'le not abide the Test.
The reconcilement of a drab of state,
Tript, ith' height of pride when topt with pleasure,
O'twere fine foole state pollicy to trust
Raise that declining tempest to her height,
But I'le be no such president, it smacks
Too much of the great dish of foole for me,
And if I doe, may thunder sinke me. *Exit.*

Enter Messalina, Lepida.

Mess. Prevented with a storme in Sunshine,
Frost in the heate of all our happinesse,
O fire and Ice, O how betweene these two
Sad smarting strange extreames I madly live
Tortur'd in mind and blood.

Lep. To this, if rul'd by me you ne're had plung'd
But thats too late now; O strive to repent.

Mess. Repent, redivell,
Tell not me mother of repentance,
Earths pleasures are to full of high content,
To be forgot by such a bitter Pill.

* *Ac in eadem ojus Narcissus properavisset; vertorat pernicies in accusatorem. Tacit.*

Pray

Pray give some better solace, what returne
Makes *Romus* grave Matron your friend *Vibidis*,
Can she with all her holinesse of life,
Procure our pardon; is that possible.

Lep. Onely a day of hearing that's all, which
You must arme your selfe for 'gainst to morrow.

Mess. O what a lightnings this to my sad heart
My heavie heart, will *Cæsar* heare me speake,
Nay then I am sure of reconcilement.
My quick-Ey'd sence, and *Syrens* tongue shall work it
Charming like *Lethe* make him to forget
My *Crymenall* life, then my rich *Revenge*
Like to the *Plots* of thundring *Iupiter*

Horrid Musicke.

Shall ——ha, what horrid sound is this,
What dreadfull sight thus quakes me.

Lep. O 'Tis a gailty conscience.

Two Spirits dreadfully enter and (to the Treble Violin and Lute) sing a song of despaire, during which Lepida sits weeping.

Song.

1. Spir. *Help'esse wretch despaire, despaire,*
2. Spir. *Foole to live, why draw'st thou Ayre.*
1. Spir. *Friends all are dread,*
Friends all are dead, thou hast none.
2. Spir. *Those that seem'd like Chaffe are blowne.*
1. Spir. *Then die, O-- die,*
Die--O die.
2. Spir. *'Tis better die then live disgrac'd,*
Ioyes and glories all defac'd.
1. Spir. *Thy pride of eyes,*
Thy pride of eyes,

Which world of hearts have fier'd
Gon is their glory now no more desir'd.
2. Spir. *Then die—O—die*
1. Spir. *Die--O--die,*
Die be free live exempt
And scorne the base worlds base contempt.
1. Spir. *Come live with us, live with us,*
Live with us, with Spirits dwell,
Life is a lake of woe continuall hell. *Exeunt.*

After this song (which was left out of the Play in regard there was none could sing in Parts) Enter the Ghosts of the murdered Roman Dames, Silius, Valens. Proculus, Menester, Saufellus, two Ruffaines and Bawd, they surround her with their Torches.

Mess. Swallow me earth, gape gape and swallow
Hide me from sight of this sad spectacle,
No? why then doe state till you burst agen
'Tis true, I was your deaths chiefe Actor
Mischiefes chiefe Engine, ruine of you all
Quid faciam? ubi fugiam, hic, & illic,
Ubinam nescio, O dira Fata. *Exeunt Ghosts.*
Close eyes and never open, all's vanisht now.
T'was but the perturbation of my minde
So let it passe--what agen.
Enter Narcissus and Evodius whispering.
Lep. Tis a guard,
I feare the Emp'rour in his minde is chang'd
And this some sudaine plot to take your life.
Evod. Within this houre my Lord.
Enter Headsman with Scaffold and a Guard.
Nar. Let it be so,
By that time hither I will conduct th'Emp'rour
In th'interim cut her off, when she is dead

Narcissus

Narcissus with his owne saves many a head.
Mess. A Headsman and a scaffold are these for me.
Evod. For thee thou woman all compos'd of lust
Bloudy insatiate Monster of thy Sex
See here thy stage of death, be sure to die,
If thou haste respite given thee for to pray
And aske the Gods forgivenesse, thinke it
A world of favour and be suddaine, least
Vnprepar'd we force you to the blocke.
* *Lep.* O be not wholly lost die resolute,
If thou respect the wombe that brought thee forth,
Let thy faults ripe in Act, be blowne to Ayre.
Through faire repentance.
Mess. How can that be?
Am not I onely Author of all ill,
Is it not I that have prepar'd the paths
To the loose life of all licentiousnesse,
Blacke murder, lust, and rapes unspeakable
Why doe I live? I that have liv'd too long,
Worthy a thousand deaths; I feare not death
But O the journey I know not whether,
Torments me more then twentie thousand deaths
But how so e're it must not be deni'd,
Fall then my earthly substance; thus low humbl'd
* Let my declining height submit my head
To take an everlasting leave of life.

Shee mounts the Scaffo'd, submits her head to the blocke, and suddainly rising up leaps downe, Snatcheth Evodius *Sword and wounds her selfe.*

* *Lepida quæ florentis filiæ haud concors, Supremis ejus necessitatibus ad miserationem evicta erat. Tacit.*
* *Tunc primum fortunam suam introspexit, frustra jugulo ac pectori perstrepidationem adnuvens; istu Tribuni transfigitur. Tacit. Lib. 11.*

Hold

Hold, our bloud's to precious we will not die
So like a Calfe, nor by the hand of any
But our owne, thus and thus, O this cold steele
How it offends my flesh, I want full strength
To put it home; if thou be valiant and a souldier
Helpe to dispatch me; that was bravely done
O my mad lust whither wilt thou beare me
A dimme blacke fogge rais'd from the *Lernean* Fen
Obscures my sight; farewell deare, deare Mother.
Had I beene rul'd by you, I had beene happy
Now justly scourg'd for disobedience.
A Caitiffe most accurst she is no other
That scornes the vertuous counsells of a Mother;
So farewell light of eyes, ne'r to intice,
Horrour invades my blood, I am all Ice. *Dies.*

Enter Emperour, Narcissus, Pallas, Calistus with attendants.

Emp. Is she then dead.
Evod. And that desperatly by her owne hands.
Lep. O *Cæsar* grant this Corps to my dispose.
Emp. 'Tis at your free dispose convey her hence,
And now since we are free by faire revenge,
Never shall marriage yoake the minde of *Cæsar*
To trust the hollow faith of woman more,
And if we doe; may Heaven by treason foule
Shorten our dayes; the sequell of our raigne,
Shall to the good of *Rome* suppresse blacke vice.
Kingdomes are swallowing gulphes by carelesse rule,
Iustice makes Kings the Gods to immitate,
Vertue in Princes, is the prop of state.

The

THE EPILOGVE.

OUr Play is done, now what your censures are,
If with, or against Arts industrie, the care
Tooke by the Author (and our paines to please)
We know not yet, 'till judgement give us ease.
Why should we doubt? this Theater do's appeare
The Musicke Rome of concord; you being here.
Let no harsh jarring sound of discord then,
Echo aislike, claps crowne the Tragicke Pen.

FINIS.

difficile est de bono [illegible] an
[illegible]

Difficilius est de bono quam de
malo quam disserere

[illegible] non [illegible] malis


SVSPICE CÆLVM
DESPICE MVNDVM
RESPICE FINEM
SENILIS SVM
Vera, ac viva Effigies
NATHANAELIS RICHARDS
T.B. Sculp:
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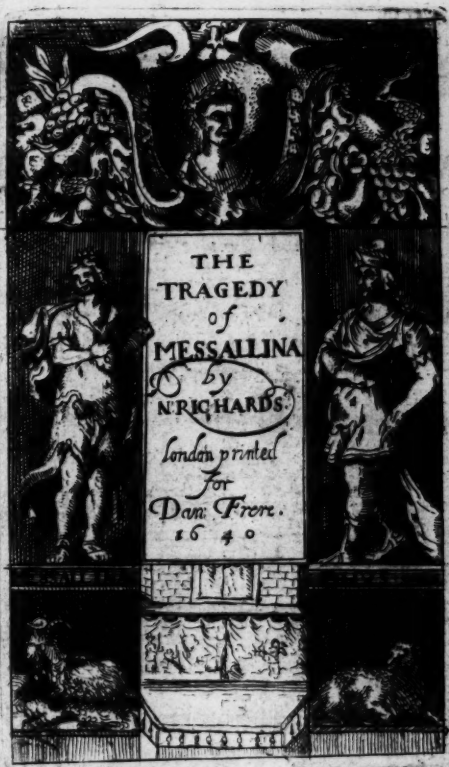
THE
TRAGEDY
of
MESSALLINA
by
N. RICHARDS.
London printed
for
Dan: Frere.
1640

THE TRAGEDY OF MESSALLINA The Roman Empereſſe.

As it hath beene Acted With generall applauſe divers times, by the Company of his Majeſties Revells.

Written by

NATHANAEL RICHARDS.

Optimus hic & formoſiſſimus idem
Gentis patritiæ rapitur miſer extinguendus.
Meſſalinæ oculis. Iuvenal, Satyr. 10.

London Printed by *Tho. Cotes* for *Daniel Frere*, at the ſigne of the Red Bull in *Little Brittaine*. 1640.

TO THE RIGHT HONOVRABLE AND TRVLY NOBLE MINDED, *JOHN CARY*, VISCOVNT *ROCHFORD*.

My Lord,

YOur right Noble willing minde (though serious occasions could not permit you) to see this *Tragedy Acted*, emboldens me (through the confidence I

have in your sweet disposition) to present it unto you, the *Heire* and *Honour* of your *Great* and Noble Family: *Emperatricis libido, periculosissima est*, witnesse *Valeria Messallina*, her Lust and Rule over doating *Majestie*. This testified by *Romes* Historians, (*Tacitus*, *Suetonus*, *Pliny*, *Plutarch* and *Juvenall*) the world (unlesse among the crooked conditions of the *Envious*) may (being honestly opinionated) perceive, that the sole Ayme of my discovery herein, no otherwise tends then to seperate *Soules* from the discovered *Evill*, the suppression of *Vice*, and exaltation of *Vertue*, flight from sinne for feare

of

of Iudgement; which seriously considered in a *Noble nature*. The *glorious Strumpet*, sparkling in beautie and destruction can never have power to tempt: This *Play* upon the *Stage*, passed the generall applause as well of Honorable Personages as others: And my hope is, the perusall will prove no lesse pleasing to your *Honour*. Two passages are past, the *Stage* and the *Presse*; nothing is absent now but the gentle approbation of your Lordships clemency to confirme the indeavour of him that truly is

Your Lordships true
Honourer,

Nathanael Richards.